



RICHARD SEES JERUSALEM.

BELLS' READING BOOKS.

GREAT DEEDS IN ENGLISH
HISTORY.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF 'GREAT ENGLISHMEN,' ETC.

ILLUSTRATED

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THE LAST OF THE ENGLISH.

1071.

IF Hereward was a terror to the Normans, when he was a man, he was no less a terror to his own people at home, when he was a boy.

One day he called together all the unruly lads of the country round. They were willing enough to follow where their young master should lead, for was he not a son of one of the largest land owners in the fens, and was he not the wildest, bravest young fellow they had ever seen ?

But on this day the unruly band went further than they had been before, they robbed a priest on his way home, and for this, Hereward was made an outlaw, that is to say, he had to go away, and might not return to England on pain of death.

He dismissed his little band of unruly boys. "But we will follow you to the world's end," they cried.

"I am an outlaw ! Do you want to be outlaws too ? Go to your homes," cried Hereward, and

he rode away. Away from his home among the trees on the edge of the great flat fen country, away from his father, away to the far north, through the green forests, and he was not seen again for many a long year.

Now while he was away, changes were taking place in England. Edward the Confessor, the last King of the old English race, was dead. The great fight between the English and Normans was over; William the Conqueror was King, and his French speaking people flocked to England, and slowly took town after town for their own.

Now while this was going on in England, what was Hereward doing?

There is a story about him, which shows he was growing in strength and courage for the great fight that lay before him.

Up in the north—so the story runs—there was a bear, a great white bear, that no man dared to face.

Hereward had never seen it, but the people told him that it had iron claws; it was son of a Fairy Bear, and knew what was said.

“He has twelve men’s strength,” sang the Norsemen. So Hereward longed to slay this bear, which all the people feared.

One day when he was riding, he saw the great white bear. He threw himself off his horse, drew his sword, and rushed forward with

a great shout. The bear faced him. Then it rose on its hind legs, head and shoulders taller than Hereward, and lifted its iron claws high in the air. Hereward knew the spot to strike and he struck true and strong. The bear rolled over—dead—and Hereward the Outlaw now became Hereward the Hero !

His name was in every mouth, minstrels sang of him, he was feared far and wide.

No wonder then, when the Normans heard that Hereward was in England again, they trembled.

Hearing that Edward was dead, that William the Norman was King, that his own father was dead and his home in the fens was taken by a Norman who spoke French, Hereward was very angry, and had made up his mind to come home and fight the Norman.

He first went to his old home. There he found the Normans sitting in the hall at dinner. He went in, followed by his old friends, and with a shout he rushed forward and killed every Norman in the place. And a cry went through the north and east of England, "Hereward the Outlaw is home again !"

Soon after this, Hereward set up a camp in the middle of the fen country, where he was joined by other outlaws and men who had been turned out of their homes by Normans.

Now though William was King of the south

of England, there were a great many people in the north and east that would not own him as King.

One day Hereward heard that a new Norman abbot was coming to the church at Peterborough with armed men to protect him. So off he started with his gang.

Early that June morning the monks saw with dismay the winding line of black hulls coming up the river ! They hid what treasure they could in the steeple and then refused to let Hereward in, when he came to the gate. Finding the gate shut, Hereward set fire to the monks' houses all round. Then over the burning ruins he rushed with his gang.

The monks came out and begged for mercy. But it was too late. With his reckless gang, Hereward burst into the minster, they climbed up the loft and took the golden things, they climbed the steeple and found the treasure there, books, shrines, crosses of gold and silver, and they carried it all away to the Camp of Refuge. "Better it should fall into the hands of English, than into the hands of Normans!" cried Hereward.

So all the monks were scattered, and when the Norman abbot came, he found the empty church standing in the midst of black ruins, and one sick monk that Hereward had spared, the

At last, in the fifth year of the Camp of Refuge, Hereward had become so strong, that King William himself made up his mind to attack him.

Where the minster at Ely now stands lived Hereward on a slight hill, which looked over the country round. The fens were at this time one great swamp cut up by rivers and streams, and William was at his wits' end to know how to reach the camp. No army could march over the fens, there was not water enough for boats, no firm ground for the archers, no space for a charge of the Norman knights amid the pools and reeds.

So he made up his mind to build a long causeway over which they could march, and stones and trees were brought from afar to build this famous bridge.

Then one day—says the story—the Normans started along their bridge in a great mass; Hereward saw what would happen. He knew the fen swamp far better than the Normans, and true enough the bridge began to sway and sink, and in a few minutes it sank slowly down into the black peat and mud carrying hundreds of Normans with it.

Another story is told of how William had a witch placed in a wooden tower to overcome the English by her spells, and how Hereward burnt the tower and the witch in it. Another, about

Hereward dressing up and making his way into the king's camp to spy out what he was doing.

At last, after months of blockade, the monks of Ely got tired, and in secret some of them stole out and went to the king. They showed him a way across the marshes, so a band of Normans crossed the fens and took the camp by surprise !

Hereward fought on to the end, but at last, seeing all was lost, he crossed bogs where the Normans dared not follow, and made his escape to the low lands near the coast and so made his way out to sea.

So ended the revolt of the Fens. William was truly Conqueror of England, for the "last of the English" had fled.

But it was long remembered that Hereward had held out the longest of all, that his heart had failed him not, when the hearts of the noblest in the land quaked within them, and it was long before the minstrel ceased to sing of Hereward the Wake—the "last of the English."

THE CRUSADES

1095-1194.

It was a bitter cold day in November, 1095, when, on a wide plain in the middle of France, a large crowd of nobles and peasants, rich and poor, were gathered together. No house or church could contain so many people.

All eyes were turned on one man, one short, thin man, wearing a plain serge gown girt by a cord round his waist. His head and feet were bare, and in his hand he held a cross. Crowds had followed him as, on an ass, he had ridden from village to village, preaching to the people. His name was Peter—Peter the Hermit he was called, from the strict life he had led alone and away from his people.

It was to hear this strange man speak, then, that these crowds had come together, to hear him speak of the wrong-doing that was going on in the Holy Land. Strangers had taken the Holy City away from the Christians, who were being ill-treated, he told them, and it was their duty to go and rescue it and win it back. As he dwelt on

the cruelties that he had seen, his face was full of woe, his voice choked with sobs, and his passion and distress touched all hearts. A great cry rose from the vast crowd: "God wills it. God wills it."

A deep silence reigned as the words died away on the air. But every member of that crowd was fired with a longing to go and fight for the Holy City. Some sixty thousand men and women put on the Crusade badge, a cross on their arm, and begged Peter the Hermit to lead them to the Holy Land. They were a poor half-armed set, though full of zeal. They did not know their way, and would ask at every town they came to:

"Is this the Holy City?"

They had no food, and plundered as they went along, so they never lived to fight for the Holy City.

Meanwhile the longing to go and fight had spread from country to country, a great army of knights and nobles and many rich and devoted men collected under a good leader and started off for the Holy Land.

In these early times the Crusaders went with good motives, thinking it was the right and only thing to do. But as years went on, men went to fight, not from a feeling that it was right and good, but because it brought them honour and glory, and gave them a power in the land.

It was now nearly 100 years since Peter the



Hermit had preached the duty of going to fight for the Christians, since the First Crusade had taken place. Since then a Second Crusade had gone, and now Richard of the Lion Heart, King of England, had made up his mind to win for himself renown and atone for his past sins, by going on a Third Crusade.

He would have atoned better for his sins had he stayed at home to rule England and do his duty as King, but instead he raised all the money he could to fit out one of the finest armies ever seen.

"I would sell the city of London itself to get money," he had said, "if I could find a bidder."

At last he and his great army were ready, and with 100 large ships they set sail at Easter-time in the year 1190. Richard made very strict rules for keeping his men in order. Among others, "If any man shall steal anything on board ship, he shall have his head shaved, shall be 'tarred and feathered,' and put ashore on the first coast the ship shall touch."

After a very stormy passage the English fleet sailed into the harbour in the island of Sicily, King Richard leading the way in his own ship, "Cut-the-sea," streamers flying from the mast, and music playing on the decks.

Now Philip of France had also collected a large army, and had agreed to join Richard in fighting in the Holy Land. He had already got to Sicily

and was waiting for Richard. But Richard was a very hot-tempered man, and very soon he and Philip found they could not agree, and constant quarrels took place between their armies.

It was Christmas Day, which fell that year upon a Wednesday. King Richard was sitting at table in his castle with many nobles and knights, when a roar of voices outside came to the ears of the King. With all speed, upsetting the tables in their haste, Richard and his party rose up and went out to quell the riot. But this was only the first of many quarrels between the French and English.

One day in February, after dinner, Richard, Philip, and many of the Crusaders had met together outside the city to amuse themselves. They were going home, and had reached the city, when a peasant passed with a donkey laden with long reeds or canes. Richard snatched up a cane, others did the same, and they began a sham fight with their long reeds. It came about that Richard and a certain knight serving under Philip passed from mere play to blows. They broke their canes and the king's cap on his head was torn to pieces.

Then the King grew angry, and he drove against the knight so fiercely that he made him and his horse stagger again. At the same moment, the girth of the King's saddle broke, and Richard slipped off. Now doubly angry,

he called for another horse, and made a second attack on the knight. It was well for both that canes were their only weapons, for both men were very angry. The knight clung to his horse's neck, as the King went at him again and again. Then an English knight came to help, but Richard called out:

“Away—leave him and me alone.”

Again he strove to unseat the knight, but in vain. Now Richard was a very strong man, and he prided himself on his strength and power. But when he found he could not beat the French knight, he cried out at last:

“Be off with you! But, beware how you ever match yourself with me again for some time. Look to it. I am and always will be your foe for ever.”

So the knight went away in grief and shame, because of the King's wrath. Next day Philip came to Richard and begged him to forgive the knight, but it was long before he could persuade the English King to pardon the man who had, without meaning it, insulted him.

In March Philip and his army went on to the Holy Land, leaving Richard to follow. The English King waited, partly because he and Philip were no longer friends, partly because he was waiting to marry a lady he had long loved, and who was willing to share with him the toils and perils of a crusade. So it was not till one

Sunday night in June that Richard and his wife and army arrived in the Holy Land.

Crowds thronged the shore to see Richard of the Lion Heart about whom so many stories had reached them. And as he set foot in the Holy Land a great shout arose from the people, for they felt he would help them to win back the town of Acre, which had been besieged for two years by an army of Christians from all parts of the world.

Very soon the heat of the climate brought on a fever and Richard grew too weak to ride or walk. Still he insisted on being carried on a mattress to the front of his army to give his orders.

On July 12th the town of Acre had to give in. Richard took up his abode in the palace and the English and French flags floated from the ramparts. It is said that the Austrian flag was also raised, but Richard seized it and flung it into a ditch. For thus making an enemy of Austria, he suffered later.

He spent over two years in the Holy Land, and many are the stories told of his great deeds and valour. Still, victorious as Richard was, he had not been able to take Jerusalem, the one great object of every crusader. The town had been taken during the first crusade and lost in the second.

Richard had only seen the Holy City once.

As its domes and turrets shone out in the morning sun, the king covered his face with his mantle:

"Alas!" he cried, "those who are not worthy to win the Holy City are not worthy to see it."

It was in October that he took leave of the Holy Land, having made a peace for three years three months three weeks three days and three hours.

"Oh Holy Land," he cried with tears, as he sailed away from its shores, "I commend thee and thy people to God. May He grant me yet to come back to thy aid."

After a stormy passage and great loss of time, Richard made up his mind to pass over land in the disguise of a pilgrim, and so get quickly to England, for troubles had arisen in his absence. Taking only his page and dressed as a pilgrim, he started across Austria, but soon he found that it was very unsafe for him to travel there. For three days the King wandered about with his page till hunger and illness drove him to rest at a village inn near Vienna.

From thence he sent his page to buy food. The page paid for the food with foreign money. This made the people suspect him, but he escaped back and told his master he must flee for his life. But Richard was too ill. To avoid being found out, he turned the spit in the kitchen, and attended to the horses. Next time the page

went to Vienna, he carelessly carried in his belt one of the King's embroidered gloves. This showed he served one of high rank.

He was tortured till he had to tell where the King hid. Armed men entered the inn. They found the so-called pilgrim asleep on his bed:

"Hail, King of England! Thy face betrays thee."

These words awoke Richard, and he grasped his sword.

"I will yield to none save the Duke of Austria himself," he cried.

The Duke came. He reminded him how he had thrown the Austrian flag into a ditch at Acre. Then, to revenge himself, he sent the King to a lonely castle in the midst of a great forest, and no one knew where he was. But Richard's page, Blondel, so the old story says, wandered about far and wide to find out where his master was hidden, and whenever he came to a castle, where he thought the King might be, he sang a song, one of the old songs that Richard loved, feeling sure if the King heard him, he would sing the same song in return.

Months passed away. The faithful page sang under many a castle window, and many a tower, but he never heard his master's voice. Till one day, the page began his song under the very castle where the King was, and he was rewarded by hearing the King singing within.

Then he made it known, and the Duke of Austria said he would let Richard go free if a great sum of money should be paid. When this news arrived in England, the people collected all the money and sent it over, for they so wanted their King to come home again.

So Richard was free at last, and in the winter of 1194, he landed in England after all his adventures, all his brave deeds, all his narrow escapes, and the people were proud of their lion-hearted King, and gave him a very warm welcome home again.

THE KEYS OF CALAIS.

1347.

It was on a Thursday in August that a great English army was seen making its way to the town of Calais in France. The knights glittered in their bright steel armour, the King's royal standard bearing the lions of England together with the golden lilies of France floated in the air, as under Edward III. their King, the army arrived at the gates of Calais.

Over the town waved the blue banner of France with its golden flowers. A herald, the arms of England worked on his long robe, rode to the gate, a trumpet sounding before him, and called on the Governor to give up the town to Edward III., "King of England and of France." "I hold the town for Philip, King of France," said the Governor, "and I will defend it to the last."

The herald rode back to the King and the siege of Calais began.

And why did Edward of England so much

want to have Calais for his own? He had already won a great part of France, and the town of Calais was a stronghold, commanding the sea and the entrance from England to France.

He knew it would take a very long time to take it, for the walls of Calais were strong and thick. Every gate had a sort of little castle of its own to defend it, there was a moat of water round the walls. Edward made up his mind to take the town by simply starving the people out.

So he had houses of wood built. They were laid out in streets and thatched with straw or broom, and in this town of the King's there was everything the army could want.

There was a market-place, where market was held every Wednesday and Saturday for meat, cloth, bread, and anything the English soldiers could need. And in this wooden town, which he called "New Town" lived the English King, his son and his whole army, making no attacks on the walls, but just waiting till the people inside should be so hungry they would be forced to give up the town.

Now, when the Governor saw what was the King's plan, he called together all the very poor French people, who had laid up no stores of food, men, women and children, and one Wednesday morning he sent hundreds of them away out of the town. It was the kindest thing he could do, for he had no food to give them, but the

poor people went away weeping and homeless. As they passed through the English army, the soldiers asked what was the matter, and why they had come out.

"Because we have nothing to eat," said the people.

The soldiers told the King. He took them into the English camp, gave them a good dinner and two pieces of money each, and the poor French people went away praying aloud for the enemy who had been so good to them.

All the autumn the siege went on.

One day a gay fleet crossed over from Dover, and the King with his son the Black Prince rode down to the landing-place to meet the Queen and her train of ladies, who had come to see their husbands and fathers at Calais.

So Christmas was spent in feasts and dancing in the little wooden town by the English court, but inside Calais, all was gloom and misery, for the hungry French people had nothing to feast on, and no heart to dance. Still they held bravely on, hoping their King would come and help them soon.

Now, not only had Edward built his little wooden town outside Calais by land, but he had numbers of ships at sea to stop any food being taken to the French. If it had not been for two French sailors, who knew every inch of the coast and who often on the darkest nights guided in a

little fleet of boats laden with bread for the hungry men, the town must have given up.

When Edward found the people were getting food by sea, he had a strong castle built between the town and the sea; he put forty men-at-arms, and two hundred archers there, who guarded the port so closely that nothing could come or go into the town even by means of the French sailors.

Still the people kept up their spirits, hoping the King of France would come and help them very soon. And one moonlight night a great French army was seen on the hill behind the English, their pennons flying, their armour shining, and the tents pitched on the hill-side was a welcome sight to the hungry people.

Edward knew the French King could only get to Calais by one of two roads, one along the sea-shore, the other full of ditches and bogs. Both were guarded. At last the King of France sent to Edward to say :

“Sir, I have come to give you battle, but I cannot find any way of getting to you. Will you fix a spot where a general fight can take place?”

“Gentlemen,” was Edward’s reply, “tell the King I have been on this spot nearly a year, I have spent very large sums of money, and I must be master of Calais in a very short time now. If he nor his army can pass this way he must seek some other road !”

So with sinking hearts the hungry people in Calais saw their King break up his camp and go away, and with him their last hopes of success faded.

It was now a year. August had come round again. Inside the town bread had failed, the horses had been eaten, dogs, cats and rats were all they had now to eat. At last the Governor wrote to the King of France.

“Very dear Lord,

“You must know that though our people are safe and well, all has been eaten even to cats and dogs, and in the town there is no food to be found. We have agreed among ourselves if no help arrive, we will leave the town and fight or die in the fields !”

The letter was given to a sailor, who managed to get past the fort and out to sea. He was soon seen and caught by the English, but not before he had tied the letter to an axe, and cast it into the sea. The ebb of the tide washed up the letter, and it fell into Edward's hands, so he knew that the town could hold out no longer.

The Governor of Calais then mounted one of the towers and made a sign he wished to speak with the English.

“Dear gentlemen,” said the Governor, “all hopes have now left us, and if your gallant King have not pity upon us, we must perish with hunger. Beg him to have pity and be content

with the town and riches therein, and let us depart as we are."

"We know our lord and king's intentions," was the reply. "He is mightily enraged that you have held out so long and cost him so much money. You must give yourselves up to him to slay or ransom at his own will."

"This is too hard for us," said the Governor. "We have loyally served our lord and master as you would have done, but we will endure still more than any man ever did, before we consent that the smallest boy in the town should fare worse than ourselves. For pity's sake, return to the King of England and beg him have pity on us."

So the two lords went back to the King and told him. The King was very angry.

"Go back to the Governor, and say, the only mercy he shall have is this, that six chief men of Calais shall march out of the town with bare heads and feet, with ropes round their necks and the keys of the town and castle in their hands. The rest shall be pardoned."

The Governor was waiting on the tower. The King's message was given him.

"I beg of you," he said, "to be so good as to stay here a little, while I go to tell the townsmen all that has passed."

So the Governor went to the market-place and had the bell rung, and men, women and children

came to the town-hall. Then he told them what the King had said, and as he told them he broke down and wept, and all the starving people wept too, "so that the hardest heart must have had pity on them."

Then amid the weeping a strong voice was heard. The richest man in Calais, an old man, rose up among the people and said :

"Gentlemen, both high and low, we must not let so many people die through hunger. I have such faith in finding grace before God if I die to save my townsmen, that I name myself the first of the six."

As his voice ceased, the poor people threw themselves at his feet with tears and groans of sorrow and thankfulness.

Then another rich man rose up and said :

"I will be second to my comrade."

And four others offered themselves too.

Then the Governor mounted his pony, for he could hardly walk, and he led the six men to the gate, and all the people followed weeping. The gates were then opened, the Governor passed out with the six men and the gates were shut again.

"I bring you these six men," said, the Governor, "and I beg of you, gentle sir, that you have the goodness to pray the King that they may not be put to death."

"I cannot say what the King will do with

them," was the reply, "but I will do all I can to save them."

Then the Governor went back to the town without them, and the six men were led to the King.

They fell on their knees and lifted up their hands :

"Most gallant King, we bring you the keys of the town of Calais, we give ourselves up to your will and pleasure in order to save our people, who have suffered so much misery. Have pity upon us."

The barons and knights standing by, wept at sight of the six brave men, willing to die for their townsmen.

But the King was angry, he hated the men of Calais, and he ordered their heads to be struck off.

The six pale hungry men said nothing, but the people round wept and pleaded for their lives.

"Such an act will stain your name," said one.

But the King was firm. They should die.

Then the Queen of England came before the King, she fell on her knees, and with tears in her eyes, said :

"Ah, gentle Sir, since I have crossed the sea with great danger to see you, I have never asked you one favour. Now I ask most humbly for the sake of the Son of the blessed Mary and for your love to me, that you will have pity on these six men."

The King looked at her in silence for some time. Then he cried :

“ Ah, lady, I wish you had not been here. You have pleaded in such a way, I cannot refuse you. I give them therefore to you to do as you please with them.”

Gladly did the Queen take the six men to her own rooms. She took the ropes off their necks, she sent them new clothes, she gave them a good dinner, which they had not had for many a long day. So the King and Queen of England soon after entered Calais, but neither of them forgot the six brave Frenchmen, who had been ready to lay down their lives, so that their hungry townsmen should live.



CHEVY CHASE.

1388.

Now in the old days, when England and Scotland each had their own King, there was constant warfare going on across the border land.

Sometimes they fought for honour and glory, sometimes only for cattle or land.

At this time, an old ballad tells, an English Earl, Percy, had been to hunt deer over the border, and Douglas, a Scots Earl on the other side, thought that was reason enough to attack England.

So the Scots nobles held a great feast to keep their plan secret, and there they made up their minds on a given day in August to meet in the deep forests on the border land.

The day came, and the knights and nobles flocked to the border with all their men well armed with spears, axes and arrows, and held a great meeting.

Now the news had somehow crept over the border into England that the Scots were collecting an army. So they sent a spy, an Englishman, on horseback, and told him to steal in and listen to their plans. He tied his horse to a tree and crept in to the meeting. When it was over and he had learnt their plans, he went to untie his horse, but it was gone ! He was afraid to make a fuss about it, for fear the Scots would suspect him, so he set off on foot, though he was booted and spurred.

But he had been watched by two Scots knights.

"I have seen many strange things," said one, "but never before a man who, having lost his horse, makes no effort to find it. I think he does not belong to us. Let us go after him and see."

So they ran after him and soon found out he was an English spy.

"If you do not answer our questions," they said, "your head shall be struck off."

This alarmed the spy, and he told them all about the English over the border.

"Since you force me to tell you the truth," he said, "the barons are all ready to set out at a moment's warning, so soon as they shall hear you have crossed into England."

Then the Scots made up their minds to divide their army, part marching to the right and part to the left, to surprise the English.

Douglas took the smallest half, crossed the border, and began to plunder and burn the towns and slay the people.

"The Scots are abroad!" cried the English, as smoke arose from the burning towns.

Then old Earl Percy called his two brave sons to him.

"Hasten to Newcastle, my sons, where the whole country will join you," he said.

Now the Earl's sons were well known as the bravest soldiers in England, and gladly they went off to fight. They were soon joined by others and found Douglas and his army near Newcastle. Thinking the whole Scots army was behind Douglas, young Percy, or Harry Hotspur as he was called, did not attack, but many small fights took place.

The young Douglas had been trained to war from a mere boy by his father, and though younger than Hotspur, he was very highly thought of by his people.

One day Douglas and Hotspur came face to face in a long conflict. For a time both fought hand to hand. Then Douglas won the pennon from Hotspur's banner, shook it on high before his knights, and cried:

"I will carry this into Scotland and place it on the tower of my castle, that it may be seen from far!"

"That," cried Harry Hotspur, "no Douglas shall ever do!"

"You must come then this night and seek it," said young Douglas. "I will fix your pennon before my tent. Come and win it back if you can."

That night Douglas had a strict watch kept by his tent, thinking the English would be sure to come to win the pennon back, but the night passed and Hotspur never came.

Next day the Scots made their camp at Otterbourne, and there made ready for the attack, which they knew Hotspur would make sooner or later. And they were right.

It was a hot night in August. The Scots had just done supper, some had already gone to sleep, when a sudden cry of "Percy, Percy!" ran through the still air!

Douglas and his men did not take long to arm themselves—the whole camp soon knew that Harry Hotspur and his English army were fighting their way over the barriers which Douglas had prepared for them in case they came.

Then when all was ready, Douglas took up a strong position, for he knew his ground well. And the battle began, one of the fiercest battles that ever was fought.

“Douglas, Douglas!” was the shout, as the young Earl went forward.

“Percy, Percy!” was the answer, as the English advanced to restore their leader’s pennon, to win honour and glory for their country.

On through that hot night, by the light of the moon the battle raged. Banners rose and fell, the voices of knights shouting their war-cries rent the air, every foot of that field was fought for.

At last Douglas and Percy met. Douglas seized a battle-axe with both his hands and dealing blows around him he cut his way through the English ranks, till too rashly he threw himself on to the spears and, badly wounded, fell to the ground. He could not get up, for his head was badly hurt.

No one knew he had fallen, for the English pressed on, till one of his cousins found the spot where Douglas lay dying.

“Cousin, how fares it with you?” he asked.



HOTSPUR'S NIGHT ATTACK.

“But so, so,” replied Douglas. “Thank God, I am dying in my armour, as my fathers have done, and not in my bed. I have but little hope of living, as my heart becomes more faint every minute. But do you raise my banner and go on shouting ‘Douglas, Douglas!’ and do not tell friend or foe that I am not there.” And

“They hid him in a bracken bush,
That his merrie men might not see,”

says the old ballad.

Then they raised the Douglas banner, and shouting “Douglas, Douglas!” they pressed into the thick of the fight.

The Scots saw the banner with the crowned heart raised on high, they heard the shout of “Douglas,” they thought their leader was still in the field, and pressed on to the English ranks with a courage that drove them back.

Then the battle raged more fiercely than before. And the old ballad tells us of one Scots fighter, who

“When his legs were smitten off
He fought upon his stumps,”

which shows how keen each man was to win the day.

Percy never won his pennon back! Soon after this, he had to give himself up to the Scots, unable to fight any more. So, of the two brave

young leaders, one lay dead on the battle field, the other was a prisoner of war.

The battle of Otterbourne or Chevy Chase, as the ballads call it, was over and very slowly the Scots marched back across the border carrying the dead body of Douglas under his banner, Harry Hotspur as prisoner and his pennon which is still shown by the descendants of Douglas!

“Of all the battles, great or small,” said a man who lived at the time, “this battle was the best fought, without cowards or faint hearts. For there was neither knight or squire, but that did his duty and fought hand to hand.”

JOAN OF ARC.

1429.

IN a small cottage on the borders of a great forest in France lived a little girl called Joan, with her father and mother and two elder sisters.

Joan loved the forest, its birds and beasts came to her at her childish call, she loved the legends of the forest, the fairy ring, the sacred tree, the haunted well. She loved, too, the church bell, and to go and tend the poor and sick around her.

While the other children went to work in the fields with their father, Joan would sit at the cottage door and learn to sew and spin with her mother. She could not read, she could not write, but she knew all her mother could tell her of good people who had lived before her, and she tried to live like them.

But her quiet, peaceful life was soon to be broken by the storm of war.

The English had long been making war on France. They had taken most of the north,

they had taken Paris, the capital, and now town after town was falling into their hands. One place of strength, the town of Orleans, yet held out, though the English were all round it, and the people inside were starving. And the people of Orleans were on the point of giving up in despair, when a curious thing came to pass.

A very good thing it was for England, when the tide turned, for Henry, the King, could not rule over all England and all France as well, and it was really better for him that his troops should be driven back, so that he could devote himself more to his own country.

Now, rumours of the war had reached Joan's ears, and everyone who passed through the quiet village home had some fresh story of misery to tell. Joan loved France, and as she sat brooding one day on the misery of the war, an old saying came into her head that a maid of France should save the land. At the same time she seemed to hear a voice saying to her:

"Joan, go to the help of the King of France, you shall win back his kingdom."

Joan had often thought she heard voices in the woods—never had she heard one so clear as this. She shook with fear.

"But," she said, "I am but a poor girl, I know not how to ride to the wars, or to lead men-at-arms."

‘Heaven will help you,’ was the answer, “and have pity on the fair kingdom of France.”

Joan began to cry. She could not understand it all. She could not get the words out of her head. And yet it was clear to her she must obey.

Her father was angry when she told him.

“I would sooner see you die, Joan,” he said, “than go to the field with men-at-arms.”

The wise men of the village laughed at her.

But Joan was firm.

“I must go to the young King. I had far rather rest and spin by my mother’s side,” she pleaded. “This is no work of my own choosing, but I must go and do it, for my Lord wills it.”

At last, one dull winter afternoon, she made up her mind to go, and without saying goodbye to father or mother, Joan made her way to her uncle’s house, hoping he would help her to see the young King. At first, he, too, laughed at her, but as he saw how earnest she was, he began to think there might be something in it after all. So it was settled that Joan should be taken to the French court.

“When will you set out?” she was asked.

“Better now than to-morrow—better to-morrow than later,” she replied quickly.

“And how will you go clad?”

“I must go in men’s clothes,” said Joan.

They found her a page’s suit, for it would

have been unsafe for a woman to travel through France in the disturbed state of the country.

It was very cold and the journey was long, but Joan repeated the words, that France should be saved by a maid from the south, and bravely went on. They often travelled by night, as well as by day and as secretly as they could. When they stopped, Joan just lay down as she was, wrapped in a warm woollen shawl, and slept.

At last, at the end of eleven days, they arrived at the French court. It was evening when she came before the young and as yet uncrowned King. The great hall was in a blaze of light, and was thronged with nobles and soldiers.

Joan entered very humbly and went straight up to the young King.

"My name is Joan the maid," she said in her gentle voice. "The King of Heaven sends me to tell you, you shall be crowned King."

The jeers of the courtiers stopped as she spoke. Charles the King led her aside and talked long and earnestly with her. She told him of the voice she had heard telling her she should save France, she begged him to give her an army and let her go to Orleans.

Orleans was now almost lost and Charles grasped at this last chance of saving the town. He gave Joan a page and trusty men to take care of her, mounted her on a splendid black horse, clad her in bright white armour from

head to foot, and gave her full command of the troops. So Joan started off. She carried a great white banner, and had a little sword in her hand, but "I do not wish to use my sword to kill anyone," she said.

Her very goodness made the soldiers like her and glad to obey her, and people crowded round as she rode along, and held up the children to get one glimpse of Joan the maid, who was to save France from the hands of the English.

At eight o'clock one April evening she crossed the river into the town of Orleans, and the Governor of the city came out to meet her.

"I bring you the best aid ever sent to anyone," she said to him, "the aid of the King of Heaven."

She then went to the great church and there, overcome with the greatness of her work, she wept, and all the people wept with her.

Then she rode round the walls to cheer the despairing men, who for six months had been defending their town. She had already sent two heralds over to the English to bid them retreat or yield, and had been told rudely to go home and mind her cows!

Charles had given orders that nothing should be done without Joan's consent.

But one night some of the leaders attacked a large party of English while she was resting.

She heard the clash of arms. In a moment she was up and dressed.

"Quick, my horse, my arms!" she cried. "Why did you not wake me, naughty boy," she said to her little page who was playing, "and tell me the blood of France was spilt?"

She mounted her horse and galloped off with her men-at-arms, and was just in time to rally the forces and gain the fort. It was her first victory, the first time too she had seen men wounded and killed around her. And Joan cried over them. She was still the tender-hearted peasant girl. Then again she wrote to the English:

"Men of England, who have no right in the kingdom of France, the King of Heaven sends you word by me—Joan the maid—to retire into your own country."

This note she tied with a thread round an arrow and shot it into the English camp, but they only laughed at her again.

Then, by Joan's help, fort after fort was taken from the English till only one was left. The morning came when they were to attack it. Joan was ready.

"Stay, Joan," said her host, "stay and eat this fish we have just caught."

"Keep it till this evening," she said gaily, "when I have taken the fort."

The sun was rising over the river that runs

ENGLISH HISTORY.

round the town of Orleans, when Joan at the head of the French army, marched against the fort.

By ten o'clock the fight began. Joan rode hither and thither with her standard, bidding the men hope, for the place should be theirs. Then seeing the French were gaining the rampart, she dismounted, seized a ladder, and was just mounting the wall, when an English arrow shot her. She fell. They carried her out to the grass and laid her down. Then seeing her wound she cried.

Night was coming on. The Governor sounded the retreat.

"Wait a little," pleaded Joan, "my standard shall yet touch the wall and you shall enter the fort."

She soon returned, and the fight went on more fiercely. The English were failing.

"Yield, yield," she cried.

The English believed her to be a witch—they were afraid. She saw them waver, her standard floated towards the fort.

"Enter in God's name, the fort is ours," she cried. She was right. The victory was won, and there was nothing for the English to do but retire.

So the town of Orleans was saved, for in ten days Joan had done what the French leaders had failed to do in six months.



With her army Joan marched to have the King crowned. Then she felt her work was done.

She threw herself at the King's knees crying, and all the people round wept too.

"Oh gentle King, the pleasure of God is done," she cried, as she begged leave to go home.

But the King would not let her go.

"If I might but go and keep the sheep once more with my sisters, they would be so glad to see me," pleaded Joan.

But she had saved Orleans, and Charles had more work for her to do.

The rest of Joan's story is very sad. After a time she fell into the hands of the English, and after a mock trial, she was sentenced to be burnt as a witch. As the flames rose around her in the market-place, one great cry burst from her lips and rang through the crowd.

"Unjust, unjust," was the murmur that ran through the ranks of Englishmen.

"We are lost," muttered one English soldier who had been violent against her while she lived, "we have burnt a saint."

THE "REVENGE."

1591.

It was a hot summer day, just three hundred years ago, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, when a small fleet of six English ships was lying off a little island not far from Spain. They had been lying there for the last six months hoping to waylay some ships from Spain. Many of the English sailors were ill and on land, and the ships, having been six months at sea, were out of repair.

All of a sudden, from over the sea came a ship, all her sails up, to bring the message that there were no less than fifty-three large ships of Spain at sea, close by, and bearing down on the little English fleet.

What could they do? Six little English ships against fifty-three large ships from Spain!

The order was given to get ready the ships at once and to sail away, as it was certain death to fight so large a number.

Five of the ships were soon ready with their

men on board and their sails up, but one ship called the "Revenge" was not quite ready.

"I have still ninety sick men on shore," said her captain, "and I cannot and will not leave them to fall into the hands of Spain. I must wait till they are all on board, and I will follow as soon as I can."

So the five ships sailed away, and they were out of sight before the little "Revenge" was ready with all her sick men on board.

The captain, whose name was Sir Richard Grenville, helped them with his own hands to get on board, and had them all carried down below, and laid in the ship's hold so that if there was any fighting, they should be safe. For a great many of these men had come from the same village in England as Sir Richard. It was a little village in Devon, and the men knew that their captain was as gentle in peace as he was fierce in war, and they loved him for his goodness and courage.

All this took some time, and the little ship had not sailed far away from the island, when the great fleet of Spain came in sight. Great big ships they were too, standing high up out of the water like great castles in the sea. They had, too, just a hundred times as many men on them as the "Revenge."

The five ships had gone, and the "Revenge" was alone.

There were two questions.

"Shall we fight our way through the great line of the Spanish fleet, or shall we turn our backs on the foe and fly?"

But Sir Richard Grenville was an Englishman, and to him there was no choice.

"We are all good Englishmen," he said, drawing himself up to his full height. "We will never turn our back on the foe. We will fight our way through the Spanish fleet or we will die."

And a great cheer went up from his little handful of men, and they felt ready to die with their brave leader if need be.

So, with her hundred sailors on board, and her ninety sick men lying below, the little "Revenge" ran on, all her sails up, right into the heart of the foe.

The men on board the big Spanish ships just mocked at the daring of Sir Richard, but they did not mock long. For the first big Spanish ship that came alongside, had soon to retire, so fiercely did the English fight, so hot was the fire from their guns. The Spanish ships came on, sometimes five at the same time, and the Spanish men got on board the little "Revenge" and fought hand to hand with the English, but each time they were driven back to their own decks or into the sea.

The fight began at three on that summer day,

and it lasted right on into the night. And all night long, instead of going to bed, they fought on, and ship after ship drew back or sank in the sea. And the little "Revenge" herself was all but a wreck.

"Fight on! Fight on!" cried Sir Richard. He was badly wounded himself, but he stayed on deck, never thinking of his own pain. At last—it was nearly twelve o'clock at night—he was wounded again, and the doctor took him to the cabin to bind up his wounds. But a shot killed the doctor by his side, and hurt Sir Richard.

Still he cried "Fight on! men of Devon, fight on!" Then came a time when forty of his men were killed, when the masts of the "Revenge" were broken, the deck strewn with sick and wounded, and all the powder was spent.

The Spanish ships lay round in a broken ring, all of them the worse for the conflict, and watched to see what would now happen to the brave little ship. They saw she could fight no more. But still Sir Richard would not fall into the hands of Spain.

"We have fought our fight, my men," he said, "and we have gained great glory. What does it matter if we die to-day or to-morrow? Sink the ship, master gunner. Let us fall into the hands of God not into the hands of Spain!"

The gunner was ready to obey his orders,

THE "REVENGE."

but the poor men, who had fought all night, felt they could not sink their ship. They loved the little "Revenge," they loved their wives and children at home.

"We will make the Spaniards promise to let us go home, if we give ourselves up now," they said. "Let us have our lives and we may live to fight again."

And Sir Richard lay dying, too weak now to insist on his order being obeyed, too ill to care what became of his own life.

What had he done? He had fought, and he had lost in the fight, lost his men, lost his ship, lost his own life. Had he won? Yes, he had gained just this, a glory for England and England's men and England's ships, for the Spaniards would take care another time how they met an English fleet, or any English man, knowing, as they knew now, the worth of *one* English ship against their numbers.

So the men gave themselves up to the Spaniards at last.

And the Spaniards bore Sir Richard from the "Revenge" to their best and largest ship, and laid him by the mast. They were one and all kind to him, and they praised him to his face, and felt they could not show him honour enough for his courage.

But Sir Richard was dying. The Spaniards all crowded round to look at him for the last time.

All of a sudden he rose up and stood on the deck of the Spanish ship.

"Here die I, Richard Grenville, with a joyful and quiet mind," he cried, "for I have ended my life as a true soldier ought to do, fighting for my Queen, my country and my faith. I have but done my duty as a man is bound to do."

And he fell on the deck and died.



THE PILGRIM FATHERS.

1620.

IN the reign of James I. there lived in England, mainly in the east, a sect of people, who were called Puritans. They were very strict, they thought it a sin to hunt a stag, to play at chess, to put starch into a ruff, or to amuse themselves.

For this they were hunted and ill-treated. Some were put into prison, some had their houses beset day and night and had to flee.

At last, the little band made up their minds

to go across the sea to Holland. It was a bitter resolve, for they loved England, but they loved better what they thought was right, and they hoped in a new land, among new people, to spread their views. Anyhow, they would all be together, and would be no more ill-treated.

So across the sea to Holland they went.

Twelve years passed away, and then the little band began to think of going further.

They were proud of being Englishmen, and feared lest their children should learn Dutch habits, which they did not like, such as the mode of keeping Sunday, so they made up their minds to go away to America. There upon the shores of the New World they would start life afresh.

Now the Dutch had grown very fond of the Puritans.

"These English," they said, "have lived among us for twelve years, and yet we have not had anything to say against any one of them!"

A crowd was waiting by the shore to see off the "Pilgrim Fathers" as they now called themselves. There were old men, women, and little children to say "Goodbye" to, there was crying and sobbing, and they were not able to speak for their sorrow.

"But the tide, which stays for no man," called them away, and with tears they took leave of each other, which was the last leave to many of them.

With a good wind the little ship sailed away to Plymouth, where a larger ship was waiting for them. In England some of their friends joined them, and in the late summer, after many delays, the hundred Pilgrims started forth for their new home in the "Mayflower."

A "fine small gale" was blowing, as the rocks of Cornwall faded from the sight of the Pilgrims, and they looked for the last time on the shores of England, which they would never see again. The great sea, so little known in those days, lay before them, and beyond that, the coast of the New World, with all its unknown wonders.

At first, with fair winds they sailed along well, but then set in great gales, and the long swell of the Atlantic almost washed over the little ship. Still the "Mayflower" went forward, struggling through wind and weather.

Once or twice they almost made up their minds to turn and go home. But they always struggled on again. The misery of those on board was very great. They were crowded together, frightened at the high waves, and longed for land.

So sixty-four long days passed away on a voyage which now takes but about a week, when early one November morning, the Pilgrims first caught sight of America, and they "rejoiced together, and praised God that had given them once again to see the land!"

The low sand hills of Cape Cod seemed indeed a haven of rest to the poor storm-beaten Pilgrims. But though the voyage was at an end, the prospect was very dreary. The wintry wind howled through the battered little ship and its icy blasts went through the thin frames of the old Pilgrims worn by hardship and sickness.

The first thing to be done, was to find a place where they could settle themselves and their families, for the cold winter was coming on.

So sixteen of the strongest were put ashore to look about, but without much result, and after marching wearily through sandy woods, sleeping amid forests, wading up to their knees in water, they drew near the ship, fired a signal, and were taken on board "both weary and welcome."

Then they set out to explore the coast.

It grew very cold, the salt spray of the sea froze upon their clothes as it fell, so that they were cased all over as in coats of iron.

One morning they had landed and begun the day as usual with prayers and were getting ready for breakfast, when a loud cry of "Indians, Indians!" rent the air. In a moment arrows came flying thick and fast into their midst. The English fired, and then with a cheer went back to the ship.

At last they left Cape Cod and landed in Plymouth Bay, called after the last place they



had left in England and here they made up their minds to settle. There was plenty of fish to be had, springs of water near, and good harbour for their boats. So they built a rude shelter for the men, and leaving the women and children on board, they began to lay out streets and build houses.

But the winter was on them, and already they had borne all they could. The stormy voyage in the crowded boat, the bad food, the cutting blasts of the winter wind, wading through icy water, building in the midst of ice and snow—all this told on the Pilgrims. One by one they fell ill and one by one they died. At last only half that little English band was left to battle on in a strange land. The Pilgrims were buried upon a hill overlooking the harbour they had entered so full of hope such a short time ago, and corn was planted over the hill, so that the Indians should not know how many of them had died, and so attack the few who were left.

At last the mild, warm days of spring set in, and full of hope the Pilgrims began to plant their seeds and till the soil.

They had now made friends with the Indians, and one day the chief of the Indians sent to the Pilgrims to say he would like to see some of them and settle terms of peace. So some went to meet him, brought him to an empty house

where a green rug and a few cushions served for throne and seats of state.

The chief was a great big man and was just like his men, only that he had a great chain of white bone beads round his neck, and behind his neck hung a little bag of tobacco! His face was painted with a "sad red," and his head was oiled. His men were painted, some red, some white, and some yellow. He trembled with fear all the time he sat by the white men, but the terms of peace were drawn up, and he went away pleased.

Then came a day, nearly four months after they had landed, when the "Mayflower" must go back to England.

Would any of the Pilgrims like to go back in her? But no. Their very sorrows had made the place dear to them. They would stay and carry out the work they had come to do.

Then followed weeks and months of hardship. Food failed them. They did not know at night "where to have a bit in the morning." They often fainted for want of food. Nuts, lobsters, fish, and a few deer when the hunters were lucky—this was all they had to live on.

But slowly things grew better. A ship of friends came over, wives and children of some of the settlers. They were made very welcome, but their fare was a "lobster or piece of fish without bread and nothing to wash it down but a cup of fair spring water."

But from this time brighter days dawned.

Ship after ship came out to swell the little English colony, until a great trade was opened with England, and the Pilgrim fathers were nearly lost sight of amid the numbers that settled around them. But their pluck and heroism was never forgotten by the English.

“Let it not grieve you that you have broken the ice for others, who come after with less hardship and toil,” said their friends in England, when the little colony were in the midst of sorrow and hardship. “The honour shall be yours to the world’s end.”

CAPTAIN COOK'S STORY.

1775.

AT six o'clock one hot June morning, when George III. was King of England, a ship sailed away from Plymouth Sound with a hundred men on board under Captain Cook.

"Find out all you can about the great seas of the South, we think there is much land there," he was told. "Claim any land you find for England, and let the English flag fly beyond the seas!"

So he sailed away in his new ship the "Resolution," and he did not see England again for more than three years, when he came back and told his doings.

He had first gone to the Cape of Good Hope, where he landed to have his ship repaired, as he had now been over three months at sea, and he did not expect to see land again for a long time. So he took care that his sailors should have plenty of good food.

"Fresh beef and mutton, new baked bread

and as much greens as they could eat." These were Captain Cook's orders. And by taking such care of his men, he had hardly any sickness on board. Indeed, while he was on land, a Dutch ship came in, for the Cape belonged to the Dutch at this time, and Captain Cook found that 150 men had died on board in four months from not being well fed and cared for.

He soon left the Cape of Good Hope to go south. It grew very cold, and he served out "slops" to the sailors, and gave each a "dread-nought" jacket to keep them warm.

For Captain Cook knew well the hardships of sailors, and how they suffered from cold and sickness, for he had been a common seaman himself. As a boy he had tied up his few things, a shirt and a jack-knife, in a handkerchief, run away at daybreak one summer morning to Whitby, where he was taken as ship's boy on board a coalship.

Soon after they had left the Cape a great gale blew and carried the ship out of her course, and the waves washed away a great many of the pigs, geese and sheep on board. And when the wind went down they found themselves right in among big islands of ice, which stood high up out of the sea. At first they thought it very pretty.

"But when we saw the danger," said Captain Cook when he told the story, "our minds were filled with horror. For if our ship ran against

the side of one of these islands, when the sea was running high, she would have been dashed to pieces in a moment."

He sailed about these ice islands or icebergs for many weeks till he felt sure there was no land there. It was very cold too, and the ropes and rigging of the ship were often frozen, so that they cut the sailors' hands.

One bitter morning nine little pigs were born on board, and by four o'clock in the afternoon they had all been frozen to death, though every care was taken of them by the sailors.

At last Captain Cook gave up looking for land there and sailed to New Zealand, where he had been once before. The men were very glad to see land once more, for they had been to sea over 100 days without seeing land once.

Captain Cook wanted to learn many things about New Zealand, he planted English seeds, turnips and carrots to see if the soil was good, he left some geese he had brought from the Cape to see if they would live there, and so he paved the way for the great colony England now has in New Zealand.

After some weeks there, Captain Cook sailed about the coast, landing on some of the many islands that lay near. He made friends with a great many of the chiefs, who brought pigs for the sailors to eat, in return for which they liked best to have nails, axes, or shirts.

One day a man brought to Captain Cook his little boy of nine years old. As was usual the boy was dark skinned and wore no clothes. For some time Captain Cook could not make out what they wanted. At last he found the little boy wanted a white shirt. He put one on him and the little fellow was so proud of his new dress that he went all over the ship showing himself to all the men. All of a sudden Old Will, the ram goat appeared, and not approving of a strange little boy on board, he gave him a butt with his horns and sent him over backwards on deck. The boy was very frightened and howled and cried. He told his father a "great dog" had rolled him over, and refused to be comforted till his new shirt had been washed and dried by one of the sailors.

While exploring the coast, Captain Cook found that New Zealand was made up of two islands, and the narrow strip of water dividing them is called "Cook's Straits" to this very day. He also found many islands of which no one knew.

It was on one of these islands that a chief one day asked Captain Cook and some of his men to dinner to taste a pig cooked in native fashion. So at one o'clock they arrived at the chief's house to find the cloth laid, that is, green leaves strewn thick upon the floor of the hut, and they all sat down.

In a minute, handed over Captain Cook's head

came one of the pigs, a great big one cooked whole and too hot to touch, and in a moment came another. Each man had a knife in his hand and they soon began cutting it up and eating it, handing bits in their hands to those who sat behind. They had cocoa-nuts too as drinking cups.

Captain Cook with his white face and skin, his brown hair rolled back and tied behind after the fashion of his time, and his cocked hat, must have looked a strange contrast to the natives with their dark skins, long black hair and scanty clothing!

When the summer time came round again—summer in New Zealand, but winter at home, Captain Cook left the islands and sailed to the south. But he found himself among the icebergs again. They stood out of the sea like mountains till lost in the clouds, and it was out of the question to get through them. So he turned the ship and sailed back to the islands again. The people were very glad to see the “Resolution” coming back.

“But we shall see each other no more,” said Captain Cook to the old chief with whom he had dined and who had crowded the ship with fruit and pigs. And the old chief wept and said:

“Let your sons come and see us, we will treat them well.”

And England's sons have gone out and made

many a pleasant home in those islands which Captain Cook found.

After three years sailing about among the southern islands Captain Cook came home to make known to the King what he had done, and to tell him what lands he had claimed for England. The country rang with his praises, not only for his discoveries, but also for his care of the sailors.

He had started with over 100 men, and after three years sailing about in various climates, now hot, now cold, exposed to hardships, to sun and wind, only one man had died! He had made the health and happiness of his seamen his first care and study, he had made medicines to cure them when ill, he had set them the example of eating what was wholesome however nasty, he saw that they changed into dry clothes when they were wet and cold with night watches.

And his crew, his country and his King never ceased to be grateful for all he had done.

THE LOSS OF NELSON'S ARM.

JULY 24, 1797.

It was a dark and stormy night on the sea, the waves were dashing high, and no moon shone through the black darkness.

A large ship, the "Sea horse," was rocking about not far from the Canary Islands, and on board Nelson and his captains were having supper. A lady, wife of one of the captains, was also there.

On this July night, Nelson had made up his mind to do a desperate thing. He was at war against Spain, and it was important to take a high fort on one of the Canary Islands which belonged to Spain. So, when supper was over, he told his men to let down the boats, and row very quietly from the big ships to the shore. It was so dark, he felt sure that the Spaniards would not see them, so that they could all land and take the fort before the enemy could get ready.

Just before they started, Nelson called his step-son, Nesbit, to him.

"Stay and take care of the ship," he said to the young man, "should we both fall, what will become of your poor mother?"

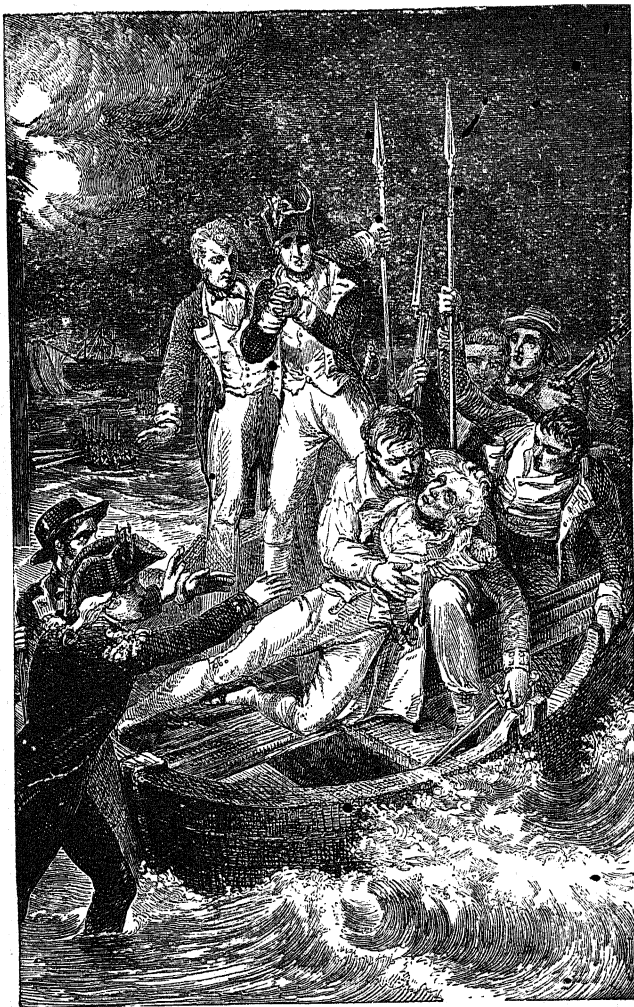
"Sir," replied the boy, "the ship must take care of herself; I will go with you to-night, if I never go again."

At eleven o'clock the boats started. The men knew it was a great risk, that they might never return, but they were ready to go anywhere with Nelson. When they were quite close to the landing-place, Nelson gave the order that the boats should cast off from each other, give a hurrah, and push for the shore. They still thought the Spaniards had not seen them. But their shout was answered by a loud roar of cannon which showed but too plainly that the enemy was ready for the attack.

With true courage the brave seamen advanced, but it was useless. A heavy fire opened on the English, and amid noise of cannon, the breaking waves on the shore, the cries of wounded sailors, Nelson gave the command to retreat.

At this very moment he was shot through the right elbow just as he was drawing his sword and stepping out of the boat. He fell, still grasping the sword, which had belonged to his uncle, in his hand.

"I am shot through the arm, I am a dead man." His step-son Nesbit heard the cry. He laid him in the bottom of the boat, and laid his



NELSON SHOT THROUGH THE ARM.

own hand over the wounded arm, so that Nelson should not see how it was bleeding.

Then taking the silk handkerchief from his neck, he bound it tightly round, and by this presence of mind he saved Nelson's life.

One of his barge-men tore his shirt into shreds and made a sling for the wounded arm.

The boat had run aground with the fall of the tide, but Nesbit with five other seamen got it afloat. Then Nesbit took an oar and gave orders to row back to the ship.

The voice of Nesbit giving his orders, roused Nelson from his fainting state, and he asked to be raised up that "he might look a little about him."

Nesbit raised him. Little could be seen through the dark night, the roar of guns filled the air, and flashes could be seen on the stormy sea.

All of a sudden a wild cry rang through the darkness from one of the boats. A shot had struck it under water, and it filled and went down.

Nelson could lie still no longer. Heedless of the pain he was suffering, he gave orders to row at once to the sinking boat. And then, thinking only of the poor drowning men, forgetful of his helpless right arm, he lifted man after man into the boat with his left arm. The risk was very great, and as soon as the boat was full, they rowed to the ship.

The nearest ship to them was the "Sea-horse," but Nelson steadily refused to go on board. Nesbit and the others told him it might be at the risk of his life to row on further to another ship, for his wound was now much worse, and he was in great pain.

"I had rather suffer death," replied Nelson, "than alarm the captain's wife on board by letting her see me in this state, when I can give her no news of her husband."

So the sailors rowed on as fast as they could to the next ship. When they came alongside, their first thought was how to help Nelson up.

He refused all help.

"Let me alone. I have yet my legs left and one arm," he said, so eager was he for the boat to go back and pick up more men from the sinking boat.

A rope was thrown over the side, which he twisted round his left hand, while his right arm hung helpless at his side. His spirit was the wonder of all on board.

"Now tell the surgeon to make haste. I know I must lose my arm, so the sooner it is off the better," Nelson said.

It was two o'clock in the morning.

With his usual firm courage, he had his right arm cut off, and half-an-hour later, he took up his old command.

In his official report Nelson made no mention

of the loss of his arm, but in a letter to his commander-in-chief, written three days later with his left hand, he wrote sadly:

"I am now useless to my country. The sooner I get to a very humble cottage the better, and make room for a better man to serve the State."

A "better man" it would have been hard to find. The man who could utterly put aside his own pain, who could risk his own life to save the lives of his sailors, who had shown he could do more with his one left arm than most men with two was not the man that England would allow to retire to "a very humble cottage."

Still in great pain, Nelson returned to England, where he stayed for many months till he was quite well again. Then he was given command of another ship, and he lived to do great things for England.

But the splendid victory he won eight years later at Trafalgar, though he paid for it with his life, was hardly a greater action than the quiet rescue, with one arm, of his drowning sailors on that stormy night off the Canary Islands.

THE FIRST RAILWAY.

1825.

“YES, lads, the day will come, when trains will take the place of mail coaches, and railroads will become the great highway for the King and all his subjects! I only wish I may live to see the day.”

So said George Stephenson not long before the first railway was opened.

He had worked and worked for many a long year to make a steam engine that should go along smoothly on lines, and draw trucks of coal behind it. For at this time, when George IV. was reigning in England, horses had to draw all the heavy weights, and people had to travel from one end of England to the other in mail coaches.

It was no light task to invent an engine that would go. Many men had tried. One had made an engine to go upon four legs like a horse, but it never got far, for as soon as it was ready to start, the boiler burst!

Then another man made a great clumsy engine,

the boiler was of iron. The whole engine was full of pumps and cog-wheels, and it took many men to see after it when at work. At last it was ready, and with difficulty the "strange machine" on eight wheels was put on the line. A large barrel of water was placed behind it on wheels as tender. But it would not move an inch.

Its maker, Tommy Waters, grew angry.

"She *shall* go," he cried, taking hold of a bit of his engine, and at last he got it to move.

But no sooner did it begin to work than "She flew all to pieces, and it was the biggest wonder in the world we were not all blown up," said a man who had been standing by when the engine burst up. So that too was a failure. But he tried again, and made an engine on four wheels, which the people called "Black Billy."

"Black Billy" crept along very very slowly at a snail's pace, with a few waggons behind, at the rate of a mile an hour. Very often it stuck and could not get on at all. Then horses had to be sent to drag the engine back to the shop, and indeed, after a time, horses were sent out to follow it, so that they should be on the spot to pull "Black Billy" home when he gave up work.

"It is a perfect plague," said the poor workmen. Most horses were very much alarmed at this noisy engine blowing off sudden jets of steam into the air, and orders had to be given that as

soon as a horse came in sight "Black Billy" must be stopped till it had passed.

And not only horses, but men too were afraid of it. One dark night a stranger was walking along the road, up in the north of England, where one of the first lines were laid. All of a sudden "Black Billy" was seen coming slowly along the line, puffing and snorting. The stranger was filled with fear. On came the engine, shining out in the dark, working its piston up and down like a huge arm, snorting out loud blasts of steam, and throwing out smoke and fire as it panted along. The stranger could stand it no longer, he rushed through the hedge, ran across the fields, and called out to the first person he met:

"I have just seen a terrible demon on the road!"

Now George Stephenson had seen "Black Billy," and he saw the mistakes that had been made in making the engine.

"I can make a better engine than 'Black Billy,'" he said. And if George Stephenson said a thing he did it.

So he made a new engine, and he found what no one had found before, that the wheels need not be cog-wheels, but smooth.

Still, though much better than "Black Billy," his engine was very clumsy. The hissing blast of steam was still a terror to horses and cattle,

and the engine moved forward with jumps and jerks!

Yet he did not despair. He went on improving his engine and making new ones to go faster, and to carry more weight, until at last success crowned his efforts.

A line was made from Stockton to Darlington twelve miles long, and it was made known that one of Stephenson's new engines was to run, drawing a long line of waggons!

It was an autumn day, when an immense crowd gathered to see the first public railway. "There will be a terrible blow up," said some, while others came "just to see the bubble burst." Few thought it would be a success.

The time came, the signal was given, and the new engine started off driven by George Stephenson himself. First came six waggons loaded with coals and flour, then a coach full of people, then twenty-one waggons fitted up with seats for people, and then six more waggons of coals.

Cheers arose from the crowd as the train passed along at the rate of four miles an hour!

Stephenson was now bent on making a railway from Liverpool to Manchester to carry people and not coals. He said he could make an engine to go at the rate of ten miles an hour if not more! But the idea of such speed struck fear into the hearts of all, and they opposed him. Every difficulty was thrown in his way, he was told it

would be most unsafe, he was told he must be mad to think of such danger! A few members of the House of Commons asked to see him.

"Now suppose," said one member, "suppose one of your engines to be going along the railroad at the rate of ten miles an hour, and a cow were to stray upon the line and get in the way of the engine—would not that be very bad?"

"Yes," replied Stephenson, with a twinkle in his eye, "very bad—for the cow!"

At last people gave way and Stephenson began his work.

One autumn day five years later, his new line was opened, and, amid ringing cheers, Stephenson drove his new and best engine over bridges and through tunnels at the rate of twenty-four miles an hour, one of his first passengers being the Duke of Wellington!

So it dawned on the people of England that the new steam-engine was faster than the old stage coach and its horses: one railway after another was made, till the country became the network of railways it is now.

And so, thanks to Stephenson's stout heart and good work, his words came true that: "Trains would take the place of mail coaches, and railroads would become the great highway for the King and his subjects!"

LORD ASHLEY'S BILL.

1842.

EARLY in the reign of Queen Victoria, a great cry went up from our country on behalf of the little children, who were then made to work in coal mines all day long, and sometimes all night long too.

Work, work, work! No rest, no play, no sunshine. Their lives were lived in the dark and dreary mines.

"Tom Straw" was one of these little children. He was only eight years old, such a small pale-faced boy, and no wonder, with the work he was called on to do!

Very early in the morning, his mother called him and bade him get up at once for his father had gone to the pit long ago. The poor child was so tired, he did not know how to get up, but he knew he must, and at once too. So he got up, put on his scanty clothes, filled his tin bottle with coffee, took the piece of bread that was left for him, and started off for the pit. He was soon let down the shaft with some other children.

"I would rather drive a plough or go to school, than work in a pit," said one little boy, who was almost crying, he was so tired.

Down, down, the little children went; it grew darker and darker, till they could no longer see even the daylight at the pit's mouth. Tom could remember the first day he had gone down into that dark black pit, and how he had cried from fear and clung tightly to his father. And his father had given him bits of candle to burn until he grew less afraid.

At last the children got to the bottom. They knew where to go. Tom groped his way along a low road for more than a mile, meeting a horse and cart of coals with a glimmer of light, which showed him where he was for a moment.

At last he came to a narrow road, along which no horse could go, here he met bigger children than himself who were pulling trucks of coal like little horses. They had a girdle and chain round their waists, and found it very hard work.

But Tom's place was inside one of the doors, known as trap-doors, through which the trucks passed. He felt his way to the little hole, scooped out for him behind the door about the size of a fire-place, and took the string in his hand. Whenever the children wanted to pass through the door with their coals, Tom pulled the string, so opening the door, and let it shut itself.

Here it was his duty to sit, hour after hour, quite alone, with no one to speak to, not daring to move—even if rats and mice ran all about, just opening and shutting his trap-door. And on his being ready to open and shut that door depended the whole safety of the mine and miners. It was true, he did not get as tired as some of the other little boys and girls.

One little brother and sister passed through his trap-door pushing a truck of coals with their heads, all day long, miles and miles they had to walk with their heads pressed against the black truck which was heavy with coals.

Sometimes Tom got very sleepy, and his heavy eyelids nearly dropped over his tired eyes. Then he would be roused by a smart cut from the man, whose duty it was to see that the children did their work.

So the dark lonely hours passed away. He did not know if the sun were shining or if the rain were falling, did not know if the flowers were growing in the fields and the birds were singing. It was darkness by day and darkness by night.

At last he heard the joyous shout "loose, loose," and he knew it was late in the afternoon. Still he must wait till the last load of coals had passed through his trap-door before he could hope to get up into the air again. At last it was over, and with tired feet he walked the mile to the foot of the shaft and waited his turn to go up.

Then Tom dragged himself home. He was too tired to go out and play, too stiff to run and jump. He just ate his tea and went to bed to sleep till next morning, when he was roused up to go through the same dreary task.

Now, it was well for the children that there lived in England a kind-hearted man called Lord Ashley. When he heard about the little children working all day long in the mines, he made up his mind that something must be done for them at once, for it was a disgrace to England to have her little children so miserable and like slaves in a free country.

“But the young, young children, O my brothers,
They are weeping bitterly,
They are weeping in the play-time of the others,
In the country of the free!”

This is what a great poet called Mrs. Browning wrote, when she heard how unhappy the children were, and the whole country felt that something must be done and at once.

It was on a June morning that Lord Ashley went to the House of Commons to plead for the little children. As he stood up by the table waiting to begin his great speech, he said to himself: “Only be strong and of a good courage.”

Then he began to tell the story of the mines, to tell of the long dark days when the children saw no light, of the little boys and girls who

could not read or write or play, whose only wish was just to "go to bed." For two hours he spoke, warming with his subject, feeling that hundreds and thousands of little lives were hanging on his words.

"Is it not enough?" he ended, "Is it not enough to tell these things to Christian men and British gentlemen? You may this night, by your vote, do good to thousands of your country-people, and help them to walk in newness of life."

So full of power was his speech that a thrill ran through the House and tears stood in many eyes, while a shudder ran through the length and breadth of the land

Lord Ashley never rested till a law was passed in the House saying that little children were no longer to be sent down into the dark mines to work, but they might go to school, that little girls were never to work in mines again, though the boys might go when they were older.

Thanks to Lord Ashley's Bill, things are much better now. Children can go to school, they are freer and happier in their lives than the little trapper boy was, for they can learn what is expected of English men and English women.

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE.

•1854.

“Theirs but to do and die.”

It was yet an hour before daybreak on the morning of the 25th of October, when a few Englishmen might have been seen standing by their horses not far from the English cavalry camp on the plain of Balaclava.

The morning was dark as yet, but soon a streak of pale light began to appear behind the hills above, and through the dusk and morning mist, they saw that two flags were flying from the top of a hill, which was being held by English allies.

“Halloa!” said one, “there are two flags flying! What does that mean?”

“Why, that is the arranged signal,” was the reply, “the signal that the foe is advancing!”

As the words were said, the dull sound of guns from the heights rang through the morn-

ing air. Lord Lucan, one of the English commanders, rode forward to learn more, while others galloped at full speed back to the camp, which was soon a scene of great excitement.

Now why were the English out here, in the Crimea, fighting against the great Russian army?

The Russians were always wanting to gain more land. They saw that Turkey was in a weak state and poorly ruled, they also saw that if they got that country, they would command the Black Sea, and find an opening for their shipping, so they had advanced against Turkey, whom they called the "Sick Man."

England and France saw the danger of allowing Russia to become so large and powerful, and promised the "Sick Man" some help.

So one August day a great English and French fleet had sailed into the Black Sea, and landed troops on Russian soil in the Crimea. About a month later the battle of the Alma had been fought and won.

There is a story told of a little monkey belonging to one of the French regiments. It had climbed a steep cliff with the men under severe Russian fire. As the bullets whizzed around, the monkey put its arms over its head, and so climbed on up the cliff. At last, spying a cleft in the rock, it had darted in and lay quietly till the bullets stopped and the battle was over!

That was on the 20th of September. This was the 25th of October, a day ever to be remembered in history, as the battle of Balacclava, when the Heavy Brigade made its splendid charge and came back, and the Light Brigade made its equally splendid charge, but never came back.

It was yet early morning. The men had not had time to water their horses, they had taken nothing since the evening before. They had barely saddled at the first blast of the trumpet, when they were drawn up on the slope in front of the camp. The marines on the heights above the harbour got under arms, the seamen's batteries were soon manned, and all got ready for action.

Fleecy clouds still hung about the low mountain tops, the blue patch of sea beyond Balacclava shone in the morning sun while flashes gleamed from the masses of armed men in the plain below.

It was half-past ten, when, like a great grey cloud, the Russian cavalry galloped to the brow of the hill that cut the Balacclava plain in two, a whole forest of lances gleaming behind them. The trumpets of the English cavalry rang out through the valley and told the breathless army a battle would soon begin. On swept the Russians in all their pride and glory; they cantered partly down the hill and stopped.

Waiting for them in the southern part of the

plain was the British cavalry, the Heavy Brigade under General Scarlett, the Light Brigade under Lord Cardigan.

Lord Raglan, Commander-in-Chief, with his staff, was on a height overlooking the whole plain. Nearly everyone not wanted in the conflict, dismounted and sat down. Not a word was said.

The Russians had halted on English ground, not 400 yards from Scarlett's Heavy Brigade. Their ranks were three times as deep, twice as long, as the English. Some paces in front of his men was Scarlett himself on a bay charger, he wore a dark blue overcoat, and his hair looked snowy white against his sun-burnt face. He turned to his men :

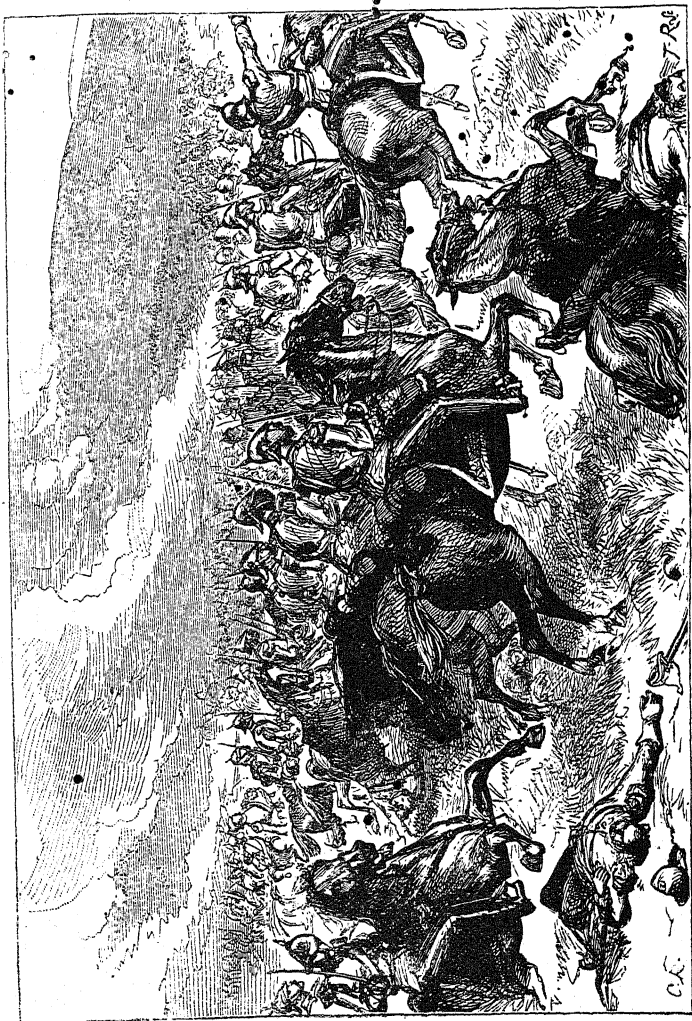
"Sound the charge !"

The trumpets rang out. Scarlett rode on ahead, and "up the hill, up the hill, up the hill galloped the gallant three hundred, the Heavy Brigade."

"Come on," he shouted, turning half round in his saddle, and waving his sword.

With a ringing English cheer, they rushed on, and slowly the redcoats worked their way through the dark masses of Russians. As the right and left wings of the Russian cavalry closed around them, a murmur of dismay broke from the lips of the watchers above :

"God help them, they are lost !"



CHARGE OF THE HEAVY BRIGADE.

But they need not have feared. Lord Raglan knew the strength of his cavalry, and said, "it was never for one moment doubtful."

The three hundred had charged with such weight that the Russians could not withstand it, they had forced their way into the very heart of the foe, and in five minutes the Russians were flying back up the hill-side with all speed, followed by a force not half their strength!

A wild cheer burst from every lip. Men and officers took off their caps and shouted with delight, as the Heavy Brigade emerged from their hand to hand conflict.

From the heights above, Lord Raglan sent a message to Scarlett and his men.

"Well done." That was all. But the sun-burnt face of the old officer beamed with pleasure as he said:

"I beg to thank your Lordship very sincerely."

The Russians were driven back, but not defeated.

It was now eleven o'clock. The Light Brigade, under Lord Cardigan, had moved down behind the place from which the Heavy Brigade had started for their up-hill attack.

Lord Raglan, looking down, saw the importance of action without delay, for the Russians were trying to secure the guns they had taken in the early morning by dragging them within their own lines. He saw, too, that Lord Lucan,

in command of both brigades, made no movement in the valley toward any attack.

Twice he sent orders to him to be more alert. Still no advance was made.

Then Lord Raglan sent down a young soldier, Nolan by name, with a written letter to Lord Lucan, to say:

"Lord Raglan wishes the cavalry to advance quickly to the front and try to prevent the Russians carrying away the guns."

Down rode young Nolan, a keen soldier with great faith in cavalry. He gave the letter to Lord Lucan.

"Lord Raglan's orders are that the cavalry should attack at once," said Nolan, seeing Lord Lucan did not like his orders.

"Attack? Attack what? What guns?" asked Lord Lucan angrily.

Nolan threw back his head, and pointing to the line of Russians on the heights, said:

"There, my lord, are the Russians, there are your guns."

Lord Lucan thought he pointed down the long north valley, at the end of which a mass of Russian cavalry could be seen.

He rode to Lord Cardigan and gave the order.

For a moment the leader of the Light Brigade was startled. Never had such a thing been asked of cavalry before, never had man been

told to lead his soldiers to such certain death! He had no choice but to obey.

But he saw what it meant, he must cross the outer part of the plain under deadly fire, a distance of a mile and a half.

He saw there was a blunder somewhere.

It was a few minutes past eleven.

"The brigade will advance," he said quietly, casting his frank blue eyes over his splendid brigade, so soon to be cut to pieces.

The men too were startled. But it was:

"Theirs not to make reply
Theirs not to reason why -
Theirs but to do and die."

They settled down in their saddles, and in a moment, they were galloping on to their fate. Their arms shone in the morning sun, while volleys of shot from the right, volleys of shot from the left, poured forth upon them, striking down man and horse without pity.

Suddenly, right across the front of the Light Brigade rode a horseman, waving his arms and madly crying out words they could not hear.

It was Nolan. He had seen the deadly blunder, but it was too late. In a moment he was shot and the Brigade rode on. As they came nearer the Russians, they quickened their pace, while their ranks were thinned with shot and shell as they rode bravely on.

From the heights the scene was terrible.

Surely that mere handful of men will not charge an army in position !

For a mile and a half down that long valley rode the Brigade steadily, they knew it was of no use, they knew they rode to death, but they were English soldiers, and they did not question where orders were to be obeyed.

Through a cloud of smoke and flame, right under the guns they passed, cutting down the gunners as they stood, never halting, never checking speed for a moment, with flashing steel above their heads, and a cheer that wrung the hearts of those that watched.

Then, it was hardly twenty minutes since they had started through the clouds of smoke, those on the heights saw the remains of the Light Brigade coming back across the plain.

Dead, dying, wounded men, and horses lay scattered over the plain, while by twos and threes the once splendid Brigade crawled back from the very jaws of death !

Some rode slowly over the plain, some limped on foot, all toiled along under heavy fire, when suddenly a glad sound caught their ears !

In front of them they heard a ringing English cheer, then another and another !

True, the Light Brigade had almost perished, but an undying glory had been added to English arms.

When the little band of heroes had formed up their old Brigade, their leader rode forward, still on his chestnut charger, erect as ever, though wounded.

"Men," he cried, as he cast his eyes over the shattered remains of his Brigade, "it is a great blunder, but it is no fault of mine!"

"Never mind, my lord," was the brave answer, "we are ready to go again!"

"No, no, men," replied Lord Cardigan, "you have done enough!"

He was right. They had done enough. They had obeyed their orders to the letter without judging the result, they had done their duty, they had faced their foe with the true courage of English soldiers.

Still riderless horses and wounded men struggled back into camp.

The roll-call began, and, as name after name was received in silence, it became known that of the 673 horsemen who rode down that fatal valley, only 195 were left!

Someone had blundered. The Light Brigade was lost.

But as the news of the disaster reached England, together with the news of Scarlett's successful charge with the Heavy Brigade, it was on the splendid rashness of the Light Cavalry charge that our countrymen loved to dwell.

"There was a deep human interest in the

devotion of the man and the men, who, for the sheer sake of duty could go down that fatal north valley, as the English cavalry did."

And though Lord Raglan grieved most deeply over the loss of the famous Brigade, yet he owned with pride that "it was perhaps the finest thing ever attempted."

THE DEFENCE OF LUCKNOW.

1857.

It was on the 20th of March, 1857, that Sir Henry Lawrence came into Lucknow, a large city in the north-west of India, to take up his duties as ruler of that part. He ought to have gone home to England to rest, for he was ill and worn. He looked an old man, though he was but fifty, his face bore traces of toil under an Indian sun, his eyes looked sad and thoughtful from beneath his bushy brows, his thin cheeks were deeply lined, and a long ragged beard added to his look of age. He had very hard work before him, and he knew it.

All over India a feeling of discontent was growing up among the native soldiers. It was just a hundred years since India had fallen into English hands and been under English rule. Great changes had taken place.

A great number of natives had been drilled for soldiers by Englishmen, they had been taught to use English arms and trained under

the English flag. But for many reasons of late years these native soldiers or sepoys were not content. They were tired of English rule, these dark-skinned natives. They thought the English wanted to take away their religion and make them Christians.

Now the Indians clung very hard to their own religion, it was a very strict one, and bound them among other things to hold cows sacred, and never to touch pigs. So when a story was spread that the new cartridges given out by the English were made up in paper greased with cows' fat and hogs' lard, great fear came on the whole native army. The story spread like wild-fire. They never doubted its truth, for just now they were ready to believe anything against their English rulers.

All this Sir Henry Lawrence knew as he entered Lucknow on that March day. He had a lovely palace to live in, a great three-storied house standing on a hill which sloped gently toward the river. Little turrets led up to a fine terrace at the top, from which, on a fine evening, he could see over the city with its gilded domes and tall pillars. At the top of all was the flagstaff from which waved the English flag.

From the moment of his arrival Lawrence felt sorry for the native soldiers. He let them come and tell him their grievances, he tried to tell

them that the English did not want to take away their religion, or to make them use cartridges greased with hogs' lard against their wish. For a time it was a success.

"I am on good terms with all," he wrote home.

But the natives, though they liked Lawrence himself, and felt he really wanted to do his best for them, still believed there was a plot to change their religion.

He had come too late to stop the mutiny, not too late to save British honour.

He saw a rising must come, and prepared quietly to meet it.

First he cleared a space round the palace, so that it could be defended to the last. Then he laid in great supplies of grain, powder, and arms, which he buried under the ground. He made a constant water supply, and did all he could think of to save Lucknow in case of a siege or attack. He never spared himself. When others slept, he would disguise himself and visit parts of the native town and see how his orders were carried out.

One day, it was April 30th, the native soldiers refused to touch new cartridges handed to them.

"It is the same you have used for a fortnight," said their officers.

The men gave in, but were sullen. Lawrence

felt he could not trust them in such a state. The night after, he marched to their huts with a force of his own men. By the light of the moon they could see his tall figure.

"Lay down your arms," he ordered.

The courage of the natives failed before the English troops.

They laid down their arms and fled in fear.

Hoping still to ward off mutiny, he held a great meeting in his own garden. It was the evening of the 12th of May. At six o'clock Sir Henry Lawrence came among them. He looked like one who would speak straight home to the hearts of his men. While every eye was bent on his worn face, every ear strained to catch his words, he stood to utter a last appeal to their loyal feelings. Then one by one the most faithful soldiers were called up to receive from his hands purses of money and dresses of honour for loyal service.

But their feelings had taken too deep root to be put aside by even Lawrence's strong words.

News of risings and murder in other parts of India reached Lawrence. He knew it must soon spread to Lucknow.

It was the 30th of May. Lawrence and his staff sat at dinner. Worn as he was with the work he had had to do, wasted with bodily pain, he tried to keep everyone bright and cheery around

him. He was told the natives would turn against them at the firing of the nine o'clock gun.

The report of the gun was heard. All was still.

Turning to the man who had brought the news, Lawrence said with a smile :

“ Your friends are not punctual.”

As he said the words, a crash of muskets told him that the mutiny had come upon them, the natives had turned against the English !

He went out into the moonlight. He was at the mercy of the once loyal natives. They pointed their muskets at him, but they did not fire.

He spoke to them, bid them stay at their posts or he would hang them, then mounted his horse, and rode away to lead his army against the main body of rebels. Having defeated them, he moved the guns to the road leading to Lucknow, and saved the city.

So for a time the siege was warded off.

At last Lawrence heard that a great body of natives was marching toward Lucknow from other parts.

With some 600 English and native soldiers, Lawrence marched to meet them. It was a hot June day, the sun poured down on to the men, the road was muddy and uneven and they grew very tired.

All of a sudden they caught sight of the native army hidden behind a long row of trees—not a few thousand, as they had been told, but some sixteen thousand strong. These soon attacked the English. The native soldiers who had declared themselves loyal, went over to the foe, and Lawrence saw they must retreat.

Under deadly fire they made their way back to Lucknow, Sir Henry riding in the most exposed parts. When they came to the bridge over the river, he wrung his hands in despair, and forgetting himself, thinking only of his poor men, he moaned:

“My God, and I have brought them to this.”

When the news reached Lucknow, the city became a scene of terror. Labourers working at the defences flung away their tools, native servants left their masters, women ran into the palace in an agony of terror, and the rebels swarmed into the city. The sun shone down fiercely. Soon the streets were deserted. By sunset more natives came dashing over the bridge. Then the blaze of watch-fires and the flash of guns lit up the darkness of the night—the first night of the siege of Lucknow, and the women within the palace trembled—and prayed.

This was the 30th of June.

Two days later Sir Henry Lawrence lay on his bed in his own room. He was very tired. He had been round the defences to see that his

orders had been carried out. Suddenly a shell crashed through the wall of his room and burst. A red glare lit up the dark room and a loud report followed. A friend who was in the room with him called out, "Sir Henry, are you hurt?" There was no answer. He repeated his question. Still no answer. At last, in a loud tone, Sir Henry replied, "I am killed," and he was right. They gently carried the brave man to a safer room, but all saw he could not live long. To the last he planned for the safety of the English; he thought they could defend Lucknow for a fortnight if help arrived then.

"Never give up, I charge you. Every man die at his post."

These were almost the last words he spoke. On the 4th of July he died. Under the shadow of the church, in a grave with private soldiers they laid him, and the words he chose can still be seen: "Here lies Henry Lawrence, who tried to do his duty."

They might manage to defend Lucknow for a fortnight! So Lawrence had said.

The fortnight passed away. Still every man stood at his post till he was shot down or disabled. Some twenty men were killed daily from the rebels' fire; wounded men were killed lying in their beds, women and children woke in the morning to find bullets on the floor. No one was safe.

THE DEFENCE OF LUCKNOW.

Day after day, night after night, the firing was kept up:

One night, it was fifteen days after Lawrence's death, there was a lull in the firing. At half-past eight in the morning there was a good deal of movement in the enemy's camp, and large bodies of men were seen moving about outside.

Warned by the look-out men, every Englishman, whether soldier or not, sprang to his post. Even the wounded left their beds, and with white faces and trembling steps, came to join in the defence. All felt this might be the end, for soon a huge force of natives advanced close to the walls and opened a heavy fire on to the English. But they retreated before the "rolling fire" from the English guns. Again and again they tried, again and again they failed, till after four hours' hard fighting they retreated altogether.

Many were the stories told that night within the town of the narrow escapes of the outposts. One outpost was under the command of a young ensign; he had but a handful of men to defend it, and the rebels came swarming on "as thick as bees," one sea of heads, with glittering weapons before them.

"Give a shout, my boys," cried the young ensign, "a loud one and a strong one."

They shouted long and loud: "Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah!"

The rebels halted. They thought there must

be a large body of men to defend the post. But after a time they came on, but they did not succeed in taking the outpost, which was bravely defended to the last.

There was joy in Lucknow that night, for few English had been killed, and a great many of the natives.

The siege had lasted three weeks, when one dark night an old native soldier made his way into the town. He told the eager people that Havelock, an English general, was making his way to rescue them and would be there in less than a week.

So the chief in command of Lucknow wrote a letter to Havelock, drew up plans of the roads and position of the rebels, rolled it up very small and put it into a little bit of quill sealed at each end. This the old man put in his ear, so that it should not be found, and next dark night he made his way out and passed through the enemy's ground safely with his little note. But day after day passed and no news came of Havelock and his army.

Meanwhile women and children were dying of disease and hardship, soldiers were beginning to lose hope and break out into sullen fits of temper. As their ranks grew thinner, their work grew harder. Officers and men worked alike. After standing at their posts all day under the burning Indian sun, they were called to repair de-

fences by night, to dig up stores, to bury their dead.

Swarms of flies buzzed about them if they tried to sleep, and covered their food when they sat down to eat. Yet all held on with a grim resolve to carry out Lawrence's dying command, "Never give up, I charge you. Every man die at his post."

The ladies had their share of hardships. They led a sort of prison life; they could hardly go out for fear of being shot; they had to wash their own clothes and those of the children, to cook their own meals, which were mostly made up of beef and rice, and to sweep their own rooms. They had to nurse the little children who were dying off one by one for want of good food and fresh air, and to tend the sick men who were wounded at their posts, to comfort those whose husbands or fathers had already been killed.

Still the English flag floated from the palace roof; it was torn, riddled with shot, the staff cut through by bullets. But at night the soldiers proudly mended their flag, and the patched-up banner waved to the last, bidding defiance to the rebel natives.

So the whole month of August with its burning sun and its heavy rains, passed slowly away, and September found the faithful little garrison still holding on, though their hopes of relief were grower fainter and fainter.

THE RELIEF OF LUCKNOW.

MEANWHILE where were Havelock and the English army, and why did they not come to relieve the gallant defenders of Lucknow?

On June 20th, General Havelock had been given command of a small army to march to the relief of Lucknow and the north-west district where the mutiny was worst. He was a man who had fought many a battle for his country, but he had never before commanded a British army in the field, and this had been the desire of his life. He was a man with a stern sense of duty, he was, in every sense of the word, a good man and an able man. He drilled and trained his army of soldiers; a great many were shop-keepers, some were volunteers, and on July 7th he was ready to start. His Highlanders had to wear heavy woollen tunics, being unable to wait for light summer clothing.

It was the height of the Indian summer when Havelock and his little band started off to march through dreary wastes of land, passing here and

there a ruined village—not a soul was to be seen, the land seemed deserted.

On the morning of the 12th they met the rebel army and defeated it. It was the first check the natives had received since the beginning of the mutiny. They had carried all before them; now they were to learn what a handful of Englishmen could do!

The troops were tired with a march of twenty-four miles and a battle lasting four hours. They had not tasted food for twenty hours, and they sank on to the ground worn out. But there was little time for rest. On they started again. Three days later they won another battle, and arrived near Cawnpore on July 16th—just a fortnight after Lawrence had died at his post in Lucknow.

Their men were too tired even to eat that night, lying on the hard ground, they slept to wake still tired with the intense heat, and to find that the meat they had kept for breakfast was uneatable. The rays of the sun smote down upon them, and man after man fell fainting on the ground.

Yet on they had to go. Sixteen miles more under the burning sun and then another battle to fight.

Havelock and his men were resting in the shade, when he heard that 5,000 natives were drawn up under a native chief. The English

were too worn out to make a front attack, so, sending a handful of cavalry to divert them, Havelock crept round to the side, his men formed in a dense mass, and when quite close to them the order was given, "Charge."

The pipers blew, the Highlanders raised a shout they sprang forward with fixed bayonets, and soon the native troops were in full retreat.

"Soldiers!" said Havelock next day, "your General is satisfied, and more than satisfied with you. In nine days you have, under the Indian sun of July, marched 126 miles and fought four actions. But your comrades at Lucknow are in peril. Your General feels sure he can save them and restore peace to India, if you only second him with your efforts!"

As the troops were about to enter Cawnpore, they heard that the women and children they had come to save had been killed. They had come too late to save Cawnpore, but they would yet save Lucknow if they could!

At five o'clock on the morning of the 28th of July, they started for the fifty miles march on the Lucknow road. But fresh hardships met them, and large bands of rebels attacked them again and again. Illness, and the rebel's fire had reduced the little army and, fearful lest he should lose his handful of brave men, Havelock went back to Cawnpore to await more troops.

On the 3rd of August more help was sent, and

the next day with some 1,400 men, he once more started to the relief of Lucknow. Once more they fought the rebel natives and pushed their way on toward Lucknow, but illness broke out in the camp, man after man broke down, and after deep thought Havelock went back once more to wait for more men. For if his little band of heroes were destroyed, Lucknow must fall, and the rebels would indeed win the day.

It was hard enough work with worn-out men to hold Cawnpore and the villages round. The weeks passed on. The middle of August had come, when a blow fell on the brave commander Havelock. News arrived that another man, Sir James Outram, had been made commander instead of himself, with orders to relieve Lucknow.

Havelock had done well, he had done more than well. Under a tropical sun he had fought and won his battles, with his men he had slept on the hard ground with no tent for weeks together. In six weeks he had passed over a vast tract of country, and had held the rebels at bay. It was only the want of troops, not want of pluck that had stopped him from pushing on.

Now another man was to have the glory of relieving Lucknow; Havelock had endured the hardships and prepared the way, Outram was to enter Lucknow at the head of fresh troops and win the honour and glory, the thanks of the little English garrison, the praise of England!

But Outram was too great a man for this.

At dusk, on September 15th, he reached Cawnpore, and was warmly welcomed by Havelock, who was ready to march on under his new General.

And next day the news spread that the new Commander had given up his right to command, had given up the chance of winning honour and glory, had given up of his own free will his right to lead the troops to the relief of Lucknow, and had left it to Havelock to carry out his plans and lead on his men to victory. It was one of the noblest things ever done in English history, it was the crowning act of a life lived for others!

Next day the army started once more for Lucknow, Havelock at the head, Outram a volunteer in the army. In a few days they could hear the firing in Lucknow.

It was the morning of the 25th of September. Havelock was up early, and spent some time in prayer. By eight o'clock the troops were ordered to advance. Round Lucknow was a deep canal. If they could cross the bridge over the canal, they could then reach the palace where the English were holding out. The bridge was stoutly defended by the natives. It took a great part of the day, but under deadly fire, the gallant little army crossed it, though man after man fell dead in the attempt.

Darkness was coming on, as the band of heroes



MEETING OF HAVELOCK AND OUTRAM.

led by Havelock and Outram pushed on, now plunging through deep trenches which had been cut across the road to stop them, now driven back by the deadly storm of bullets, which were fired on them from the houses, through the narrow streets they forced their way.

Now they could see the tattered flag waving from the palace roof showing that English hearts still beat within, and as at last Havelock and Outram led the men through the gate, a deafening cheer rose from the little garrison.

From pit and trench and battery, the cheers burst forth, from behind the sand-bags piled on ruined houses, from every post still held by a few able-bodied men, rose cheer after cheer! Women crowded forward to shake hands with the men who had fought twelve battles to save them, soldiers with tears streaming down their cheeks caught up in their arms the pale-faced children and passed them from one to another, the wounded crawled out to join in the glad shout of welcome.

The garrison was relieved, but so many men had been killed fighting their way into the town, that there were not enough to protect the women and children out. It was not till November that Sir Colin Campbell arrived at Lucknow and took the people away to their own homes.

So the brave little garrison was saved.

They had done all that British soldiers and

Englishmen could do. Every man through those long weary months of waiting had proved himself a hero, and with true pride they might cry, as they thought of Lawrence's dying words:

“Hold it for fifteen days? We have held it for eighty-seven!”

STORY OF BURKE AND WILLS.

1861.

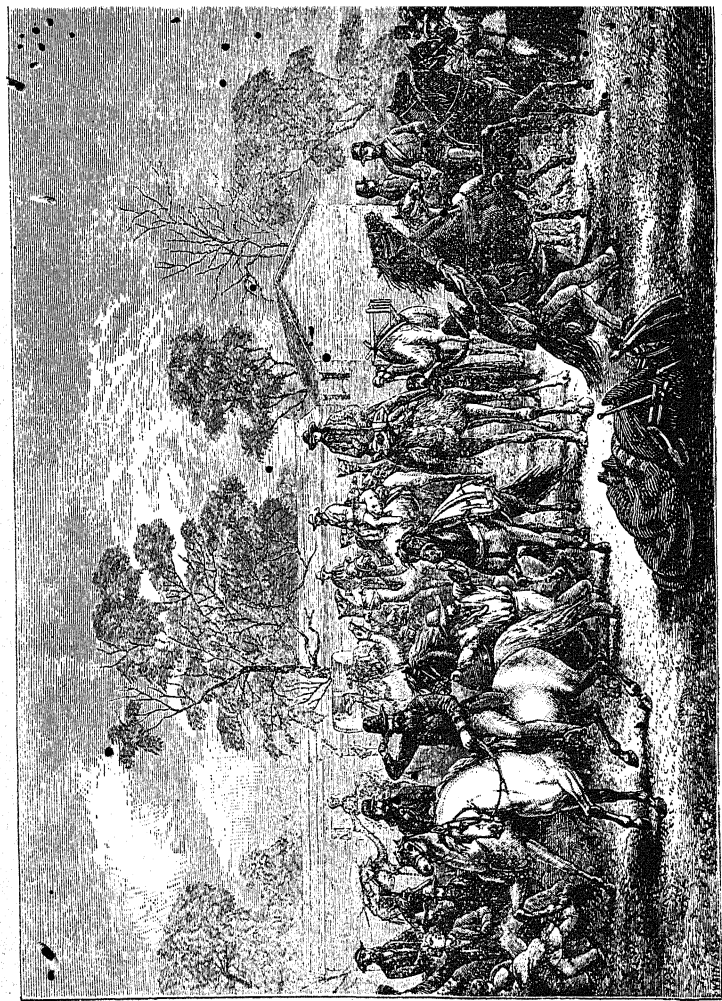
WAS the centre of Australia really a "great lone land?" Would no man ever be able to cross the great island from sea to sea? Was it all dry desert, stony and rocky, with barren hills and salt lakes, over which no man could pass?

The men who had been to explore it said it was like this, but then they had not got far. And the colonists in the south-east longed to know more. At last they raised money enough to fit out a party of men, who would try and go right across Australia from sea to sea!

It was an August day, when the men of Melbourne turned out in their thousands to see the little band of men, under Burke the chosen leader, start on their great journey.

"God speed you," they cried to the men who were leaving home and comfort behind them, to go out into the "great lone land."

The colonists had thought of all they could to make the journey a success. They had sent for camels from India, they had had a great waggon



STARTING FOR CENTRAL AUSTRALIA.

made, which could be taken off its wheels and make into a punt in case they had to cross water.

So off started the party in good spirits for their journey north.

The first part of their way lay through good grassy country, where there was plenty of food for the horses and camels, and good water for the men to drink.

"It is more like a picnic party," wrote one man, Wills by name, to his sister at home, "than a serious journey."

But it was not to be "like a picnic party" for long. By November they had done the best half of their journey to the far sea and got to "Cooper's Creek." Here they made their camp. All around was a flat, sandy plain covered with dry herbs, and a river wound through with gum trees growing thickly along its banks. It was a well-known camping ground. Other men had halted there bound for the coast, which no man had yet reached. Here Burke settled to leave most of his men and camels and push on with three men only to reach the far sea coast.

"Wait here till we come back," Burke had said to the party at Cooper's Creek, "We may be three months, we may be four!"

"We will wait," was the answer.

And just a week before Christmas, Burke and Wills with two other men, one horse, six camels and food for three months started forth on their

journey north through the unknown land. Across the desert they went, finding plenty of grass and water, meeting natives who gave them fish to eat in return for matches and beads. The sun was very hot and they often slept by day and went on by night. The country, though dry and stony, was still rich and grassy and they always found water.

On they went, now over high, hilly ridges, now following along a newly found creek by the light of the moon, now startling a party of blacks, who ran away at sight of the white men, till at last they found the water was salt, which told them they were not far from the sea-side. It was the end of February, the ground was very heavy from much rain and the camels could hardly get along. So Burke and Wills left them with the two men in camp and pushed on alone with Billy the horse and three days' food.

The land was so soft and rotten that poor Billy found it very hard to get along, and twice he got stuck in bogs of quicksand.

They soon came to harder ground and found a camp of black men. One black fellow was coiled up by a camp fire with his black baby beside him. He had never seen a white face before, and when he saw Burke and Wills, he stood and stared for some time, and then making a sign to the others, they all shuffled quietly away.

Then they found a channel through which the sea water flowed in and they were content.

They had now done, what no other man had yet done, they had crossed Australia from sea to sea in a direct line, and soundly the three must have slept that night, Burke and Wills and poor tired Billy!

And now a long line of telegraph posts and stations stretches from coast to coast, a little to the east of this very spot.

Next morning they started back to join Gray, King, and the camels, and soon after began their toilsome march home.

They had eaten more than half their food and half the way was yet before them.

The rains too had made the ground very heavy, and the camels, tired with overwork and want of food, sank down, some fell behind, others had to be killed and eaten.

Food was so short too, that Billy had to be killed, he could not have gone on much longer and the men were so hungry, they were glad of his flesh. Still on they went, looking forward to the day which must soon come, when they should reach Cooper's Creek, and find food and clothes, when they should rest and tell their story of success!

At last, one April day, Burke, Wills, and King—the fourth man was dead—and two worn-out camels slowly dragged themselves to the

spot where the party had been left at Cooper's Creek. The last ride of thirty miles had been very hard to the tired, hungry men, but at last Burke cried:

"There it is!" And hope revived.

But a dead silence greeted them. Not a soul was to be seen. Then the awful truth flashed upon them.

"King, they are *gone!*" cried Wills.

Burke, their leader, threw himself on to the ground in utter despair.

Then they looked round. On a tree was cut the word "Dig." They dug, and in a bottle found a letter to say:

"We leave the camp to-day, April 21, 1861. We have left you some food, we take camels and horses."

That very day, but a few hours ago, the party had left Cooper's Creek! And the worn-out men were too tired to follow, too sick at heart to think! They ate some oatmeal and sugar which the party had left for them, and then rested quietly for two days, when once more they struggled on their way, just the three men and their two tired camels!

Burke thought he knew of a cattle station not far from Cooper's Creek, so they settled not to go back by their old track. If they had taken the old way, they might yet have been saved. As it was, tired, ill, with but a scanty supply of

ragged clothes, very little food, they made their way on by slow stages.

At last their camels died, and their food was finished. So, they tried to live like the blacks, on a black seed called "nardoo," which they learnt to pound and cook.

But they grew weaker every day. At last Wills could no longer walk, but he begged the others to push on, and try and find some blacks to help them. So with food enough for a few days they left him alone.

He wrote his diary to the end, wrote as long as he could hold his pencil, wrote with sense, even humour, to the last page of his note-book, then buried his diary and lay down to die.

Meantime Burke and King were pushing on for help. But they did not get far. Burke grew worse and worse till he could walk no longer, and within a few days, at no very great distance from Wills' hut, the leader of the party died from hunger almost alone in the heart of Australia.

King was now alone. He wandered back to Wills' hut, and there found his dead body. The blacks took pity on him, and he lived with them for three months, when help came from Melbourne.

The colonists had grown uneasy at hearing no news of the four men who had pushed on to the north coast, and sent out a relief party.



DEATH OF BURKE.

So one man alone came back to tell the story. If the first party who had crossed from sea to sea—one man alone brought back the diary kept so bravely by Wills to the end—one man alone lived to hear the wild cheers of welcome from the Melbourne colonists, as he dragged himself home, a mere wreck, after his year of toil and hardship.

WORDS FOR SPELLING.

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p>1. <i>Here-wand</i>
 <i>un-ru-ly</i>
 <i>coun-try</i>
 <i>e-nough</i>
 <i>priest</i>
 <i>out-law</i>
 <i>dis-miss-ed</i>
 <i>con-fess-or</i>
 <i>con-quer-or</i>
 <i>speak-ing</i>
 <i>cour-age</i>
 <i>Norse-men</i>
 <i>sword</i>
 <i>shoul-ders</i>
 <i>min-strel</i>
 <i>fear-ed</i>
 <i>trem-bled</i>
 <i>fol-low-ed</i>
 <i>join-ed</i>
 <i>Pot-ter-bo-rough</i>
 <i>climb-ed</i>
 <i>treasure</i>
 <i>shrine</i>
 <i>car-ri-ed</i>
 <i>scat-ter-ed</i>
 <i>spar-ed</i>
 <i>at-tack</i>
 <i>swamp</i>
 <i>stream</i>
 <i>min-utes</i></p> | <p><i>knight</i>
 <i>cause-way</i>
 <i>fa-mous</i>
 <i>pur-ry-ing</i>
 <i>dress-ing</i>
 <i>block-ade</i>
 <i>sur-prise</i>
 <i>re-mem-ber-ed</i>
 <i>quak-ed</i>
 <i>ceas-ed</i>
 <p>7. <i>crus-ade</i>
 <i>peas-ant</i>
 <i>wear-ing</i>
 <i>preach-ing</i>
 <i>Chris-ti-an</i>
 <i>res-cue</i>
 <i>cru-el-ties</i>
 <i>chok-ed</i>
 <i>pas-si-on</i>
 <i>touch-ed</i>
 <i>spread</i>
 <i>de-vot-ed</i>
 <i>col-lect-ed</i>
 <i>lead-er</i>
 <i>a-tone</i>
 <i>rea-dy</i>
 <i>tar-red</i>
 <i>feath-er-ed</i>
 <i>stream-ers</i>
 <i>Si-ci-ly</i></p> </p> | <p><i>quar-rel</i>
 <i>snatch-ed</i>
 <i>fierce-ly</i>
 <i>wea-pon</i>
 <i>be-ware</i>
 <i>grief</i>
 <i>per-suade</i>
 <i>mean-ing</i>
 <i>in-sult-ed</i>
 <i>pe-ril</i>
 <i>ar-riv-ed</i>
 <i>be-sieg-ed</i>
 <i>mat-tress</i>
 <i>float-ed</i>
 <i>ram-pants</i>
 <i>Aus-tri-an</i>
 <i>val-our</i>
 <i>vic-to-ri-ous</i>
 <i>tur-ret</i>
 <i>dis-guise</i>
 <i>pil-grim</i>
 <i>ill-ness</i>
 <i>for-eign</i>
 <i>em-broid-er-ed</i>
 <i>ad-ven-tures</i>
 <p>17. <i>Ca-lais</i>
 <i>glit-ter-ed</i>
 <i>gov-er-nor</i>
 <i>thatch-ed</i>
 <i>sail-or</i></p> </p> |
|--|--|--|

ENGLISH HISTORY

	<i>pen-ten-tions</i>		<i>he-ro-ism</i>		<i>greas-ed</i>
	<i>an-som</i>	57	<i>dread-nought</i>		<i>ash-ness</i>
26.	<i>rea-son</i>		<i>hand-ker-chief</i>		<i>sa-cred</i>
	<i>a-lar-med</i>		<i>ice-berg</i>		<i>griev-an-cc</i>
	<i>New-cas-tle</i>	63.	<i>re-ceive</i>		<i>be-liev-ed</i>
	<i>Ot-ter-bourne</i>		<i>drown-ing</i>		<i>ser-vice</i>
	<i>pre-par-ed</i>		<i>sur-ge-on</i>		<i>feel-ing</i>
	<i>cou-sin</i>		<i>Tra-fal-gar</i>		<i>princ-tu-al</i>
	<i>ar-mour</i>	69	<i>res-cue</i>		<i>faith-ful</i>
	<i>de-scend-ant</i>		<i>fail-ure</i>		<i>cheer-y</i>
34	<i>haunt-ed</i>	74.	<i>plague</i>		<i>fort-night</i>
	<i>brood-ing</i>		<i>au-tumn</i>		<i>bull-et</i>
	<i>seem-ed</i>	79.	<i>pale-fac-ed</i>		<i>de-feat-ed</i>
	<i>straw-n-ed</i>		<i>plough</i>		<i>ex-pos-ed</i>
	<i>laugh-ed</i>		<i>bri-gade</i>		<i>de-spair</i>
	<i>choos-ing</i>		<i>mar-ine</i>		<i>re-peat-ed</i>
	<i>dis-turb-ed</i>		<i>gal-lop-ed</i>		<i>buz-zed</i>
	<i>tra-vel-led</i>		<i>mur-mur</i>		<i>gar-ri-son</i>
	<i>wrap-ped</i>		<i>doubt-ful</i>	100	<i>vol-un-teer</i>
	<i>wool-len</i>		<i>sin-cere-ly</i>		<i>tu-nic</i>
	<i>ear-nest-ly</i>		<i>po-si-ti-on</i>		<i>un-eat-a-ble</i>
	<i>glimpse</i>		<i>stead-i-ly</i>		<i>bay-o-nets</i>
	<i>re-treat</i>		<i>o-bey-ed</i>		<i>pal-ace</i>
	<i>plead-ed</i>		<i>crawl-ed</i>	108.	<i>Aus-tra-li-a</i>
	<i>sen-tence</i>		<i>shat-ter-ed</i>		<i>Mel-bourne</i>
	<i>vi-o-lent</i>		<i>in-ter-est</i>		<i>pic-nic</i>
43	<i>bear-ing</i>	90.	<i>at-tempt-ed</i>		<i>greet-ed</i>
	<i>in-stead</i>		<i>Luck-now</i>		<i>oat-meal</i>
49.	<i>Fu-ri-tan</i>		<i>neath</i>		<i>di-a-ry</i>
	<i>strug-gling</i>		<i>Se-poy</i>		<i>dis-ease</i>
	<i>break-fast</i>		<i>re-li-gi-on</i>		<i>hu-mour</i>
			<i>cart-ridg-es</i>		<i>col-o-nist</i>

